



ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY  
OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Convention on biological diversity  
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## CBD Notification 2012 18-contribution from NORWAY

### National initiatives, activities and action plans contributing to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

#### Background

In paragraph 1b of decision X/31 on protected areas, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) invited Parties to “Develop a long-term action plan or reorient, as appropriate, relevant existing plans, taking into account national circumstances and priorities, involving all relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, for **the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas (PoWPA)**, including appropriate implementation mechanisms, and, where appropriate, detailing list of activities, timelines, budget and responsibilities, based upon the results of key assessments of the programme of work on protected areas, with a view to contributing to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.” Para 1(b) continues by requesting the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the preparation of such plans to the COP at its eleventh meeting.

**In general the implementation of PoWPA, including specific action plans, is integrated into revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans, through annual budgetary propositions to the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament). National targets and indicators are defined in the national budget.**

#### Protected area network - Assessing gaps in the protected area network (terrestrial)

Goal 1.1: To establish and strengthen national and regional systems of protected areas integrated into a global network as a contribution to globally agreed goals

Long-term action plans for protection of areas are outlined on a national level, through white papers/reports to the Storting (the Norwegian parliament).

A systematic conservation programme for different types of natural habitats (thematic nature protection plans), based on regional inventories, was initiated in Norway in the beginning of the 1970s. Regional (county) conservation plans for wetlands (especially those important for waterfowl), mires/bogs (primarily selected on botanical and hydrological criteria), broad-leaved forest (selected mainly on botanical criteria) and important seabird colonies were given priority. In 1985 inventories carried out in order to identify coniferous forests for protection. Development of conservation plans for coniferous forests have been given high priority since 1988, when the recommendations from a national task force on protection of coniferous forest were presented.

Finalization of 69 out of the 70 thematic county nature protection plans is completed. The Phase I of the plan for establishment of a network of coniferous nature reserves has been completed, as has phase II (additional coniferous forests). A phase three is currently under implementation (an extension of the forest protection scheme). It includes not only coniferous forests, but also other types of forested areas.

In addition to this, a program for new national parks and landscape protection areas are under implementation and is nearly completed. When this program is fulfilled it is expected to raise the percentage of Norway terrestrial area under nature conservation protection to above 17%. Today 16.8% of the land area (Norwegian mainland) is protected according to the Nature Conservation Act (old)/Nature Diversity Act (new).

A scientific gap analysis (evaluation) of terrestrial protected areas in Norway was finalized in 2010 (NINA Rapport 535):

[http://www.dirnat.no/multimedia/46143/NINArapp535\\_verneevaluering.pdf&contentdisposition=attachment](http://www.dirnat.no/multimedia/46143/NINArapp535_verneevaluering.pdf&contentdisposition=attachment)

The protected areas have been assessed in relation to the objectives for conservation areas: to represent the range of natural variation in Norway, to cover all important nature types and secure habitats for threatened and protected species to a satisfactory degree. The extent to which the protected areas represent large, contiguous areas allowing natural ecosystem processes minimally influenced by human activities have also been assessed. Furthermore, how the protected areas contribute to the fulfillment of Norway's obligations under relevant international agreements has been assessed.

The network of protected areas contributes to fulfill Norway's international obligations to a considerable degree. The area under protection area is extensive, with an overall balance in its cover of the natural variation. However, there are some gaps with inadequate coverage of lowland areas and productive forest, as well as several important nature types and living areas for threatened and protected species.

In 2012, the Directorate for Nature Management will outline a strategy to follow up the gap analysis. The further steps will be decided by the Ministry of the Environment. ((This might result in a national action plan to fill the gaps.))

The text above does not include Svalbard and Jan Mayen. Today 65 % of Svalbard's land area is protected as national parks and nature reserves according to the Svalbard Environmental Act, while more than 99 % of Jan Mayen's land area is protected as nature reserve according to the Jan Mayen Act.

### **Protected area integration**

Goal 1.2: To integrate protected areas into broader land- and seascapes and sectors so as to maintain ecological structure and function

The Nature Diversity Act (2009) is an important tool for enhancing both connectivity and sectoral integration. See "Act of 19 June 2009 No. 100 Relating to the Management of Biological, Geological and Landscape Diversity (Nature Diversity Act)":  
<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/doc/laws/Acts/nature-diversity-act.html?id=570549>

The purpose of the act is to protect biological, geological and landscape diversity and ecological processes through conservation and sustainable use.

The Nature Diversity Act applies to Norwegian land territory, including river systems, and to Norwegian territorial waters. The act applies for all sectors of society that have activities affecting nature, for example planning and building, fisheries, road construction, oil activity and forestry.

Chapter V in the Nature Diversity Act deals with protected areas. In section 49 (activities located outside a protected area which may cause damage within the area) it is stated that:  
*If an activity for which a permit is required under another statute may have an impact on the conservation value of a protected area, importance shall be attached to this value when deciding whether a permit should be granted, and when setting conditions. The duty of care under section 6 applies to other activities.*

Section 11-8 in the Planning and Building Act (2009), gives the opportunity to establish zones requiring special consideration in areas adjacent to/bordering to national parks and protected landscapes, to prevent degradation of the nature diversity inside/within the protected areas.

Connectivity has been (and still is) an issue in working plans for establishing protected areas, especially in connection with protection plans for forests, national parks and other large protected areas. Connectivity is also an issue in management plans incl. restoration.

### **Regional networks and transboundary protected areas**

Goal 1.3: To establish and strengthen regional networks, transboundary protected areas (TBPAs) and collaboration between neighbouring protected areas across national boundaries

Some good examples on regional networks and collaboration are:

- Greenbelt of Fennoscandia (GBF). GBF is an agreement of cooperation between Finland, Russia and Norway. A Memorandum of Understanding for the development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia between Norway, Finland and Russia was signed in 2010: [http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/greenbeltmoueng\\_.pdf](http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/greenbeltmoueng_.pdf)  
The Green Belt of Fennoscandia includes existing protected areas of differing status and enables the inclusion of planned protected areas when established. One of the aims of the GBF is to enhance ecological connectivity of protected areas and stimulate transboundary cooperation .
- The Nordic-Baltic Wetlands Initiative (NorBalWet) is a regional initiative under the Ramsar Convention. The following countries are included in NorBalWet; Denmark including the Faroe Islands, Estonia, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia, and Sweden. Regional initiatives under the Ramsar Convention are intended as operational means to provide effective support for an improved implementation of the objectives of the Ramsar Convention and its Strategic Plan in specific geographical regions, through international cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.
- Preliminary project of “Treriksgränsen” - ”Feasibility study of trilateral co-operation in nature protection and sustainable nature tourism around Treriksgränsen between Finland, Norway and Sweden”.
- Emerald network – Bern convention
- BPAN, Barents region PA Network
- OSPAR convention , an ecologically coherent network of well-managed marine protected areas is being created
- Barents Protected Areas Network (BPAN): aim is to work together on common conservation challenges to ensure protection for certain key areas that are critical to maintaining northern ecosystems and species. An effective protected area network is established, including both existing and planned PAs, for conserving representative areas of natural ecosystems, habitats and species. Involved countries: Finland, Sweden, Russia, and Norway.
- Habitat Contact Forum: The network evaluates the need for new protected areas within the region and the management of existing protected areas. The network additionally coordinates multilateral projects. Involved countries: Finland, Sweden, Russia, and Norway.

12 Norwegian national parks and several nature reserves have common borders to Sweden, Finland or Russia. 11 of the national parks have protected areas in neighbouring countries. Over the recent years there has been an increasing cooperation with neighbouring countries in general, and also when it comes to special areas and projects. One example is the cooperation between Norway and Sweden on the management of Ytre Hvaler National Park (Norway’s first marine national park) and Kosterhavet National Park (Sweden’s first marine national park). An important aim of this INTERREG-project is to harmonize the management.

### **Management planning - Site-level management plans**

Goal 1.4: To substantially improve site-based protected area planning and management

Approximately 60 % of Norway’s area under protection (32 550 of 54 428 km<sup>2</sup>) have management plans approved by the management authorities. All new management plans have conservation objectives. In addition, the purpose of protecting the area is described in the regulations for each individual protected area, including the natural and cultural qualities such protection is intended to safeguard and the state that protection is intended to achieve.

Work with management plans is funded through the annual national budget. When available funding is appropriated, priority is given to protected areas where there is an urgent need for active management measures and protected areas of international value.

General guidelines are presented in handbook for “Protected Area and management” (only No):

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/1191/Omradevern-og-forvaltning>

### **Protected area threats - Threats and restoration**

Goal 1.5: To prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of key threats to protected areas

Key threats are addressed in management plans. The national management system which is under implementation (mentioned below), is expected to provide effective mechanisms for identifying, and/or mitigating negative impacts of key threats.

In 2007 the Directorate for Nature management published a strategy for active management measures in protected areas (only No): <http://www.dirnat.no/content/1184/Notat-2007-1-Strategi-for-bruk-av-midler-til-tiltak-i-verneomrader>

Management measures are funded through the annual national budget. According to the strategy, when available funding is apportioned, priority is given to protected areas containing critically endangered habitats and/or Red List species, thereafter other endangered areas and areas of special international value (Ramsar-sites, World Heritage-sites etc.), national type areas, large new protected areas and protected areas that are intensively used.

Other relevant publications:

Handbook in ecological restoration (only No):

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/500040342/Handbok-i-okologisk-restaurering>

Habitat management (only No):

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/1916/Skjotselsboka>

### **Equity, benefits and governance - Equitable sharing and protected area governance**

Goal 2.1: To promote equity and benefit-sharing

There is full compensation scheme for areas protected according to the Nature Diversity Act: [http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/2265991/PDFS/OTP200820090052000EN\\_PDFS.pdf](http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/2265991/PDFS/OTP200820090052000EN_PDFS.pdf)

Several reports on “Evaluation of management of protected areas” were made 4-7 years ago. The results have been used for deciding upon a new and diversified regime of protected area governance through the Nature Diversity Act (2009). New governance types are defined in the act. Local “management boards” for national parks and other large PAs are under rapid establishment.

Furthermore, Norway is working on a national program (defined for 2010-13) on nature based tourism and development, realizing values of nature and wilderness in a sustainable way, with local and regional development perspective – and some reflections on innovation and entrepreneurship:

The program: <http://www.dirnat.no/verdiskaping/>

Projects: <http://www.dirnat.no/content/500041355/Prosjektene-i-naturarven-som-verdiskaper>

## **Indigenous and local communities - participation**

Goal 2.2: To enhance and secure involvement of indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders

Protected areas in Norway are established on the basis of broad and thorough planning processes, where indigenous and local communities and other relevant stakeholders are involved. Indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders, are also involved in management planning processes, for instance in the work with management plans.

For many protected areas, the management responsibility is held by the County Governors and for some areas it is transferred to the municipalities. In 2009, a reform of the governance of protected areas was decided by the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament). The management responsibility for national parks and other large protected areas is now being transferred to local “management boards”, which are under rapid establishment. More than 40 local boards with extensive decision-making authority over clusters of national parks, protected landscapes, and nature reserves, will be established.

There is a consultant agreement between “Sámediggi/Sametinget” (the Sami Parliament), Sami organizations and the government in all issues regarding the Sami people. The agreement includes processes related to protection of new areas and management of existing protected areas. The Sami culture is recognized in the Nature Diversity Act, Section 1 (purpose of the act).

## **Policy environment**

Goal 3.1: To provide an enabling policy, institutional and socio-economic environment for protected areas

Implementation of PoWPA, including action plans, is integrated into revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans, through annual budgetary propositions from the Ministry of the Environment to the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament). National targets and indicators are defined in the national budget.

Report to the Ministry of the Environment: Action plan for sustainable use and management of PAs:

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/500041427/Rapport-til-Miljoverndepartementet.-Handlingsplan-for-barekraftig-bruk-forvaltning-og-skjotsel-av-verneomrader>

The concept of “integration of PA values” and “ecological services” is still under development:

Norwegian Millennium Ecosystem Assessment DN-report 1b-2002:

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/510/Norwegian-Millennium-Ecosystem-Assessment>

In a Cabinet Decision on 28 October 2011 the Norwegian Government established an expert commission on the values of such ecosystem services. The commission is to present a final Norwegian Official Report (NOU) with their conclusions and recommendations by 31 August 2013. The commission will in their work build on the international project The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) which has looked at key issues related to the economics of biological diversity and ecosystem services. The expert commission is to describe status and development trends for Norwegian biological diversity and ecosystem services. The commission will look in particular at ecosystems that are under pressure or in decline and at possible main drivers for this, and it will pay particular attention at services that are important to meet expected effects of climate change and habitat and land use changes. Furthermore, the commission will point at needs and opportunities for better measurement and valuation of ecosystem services and at how this may be reflected in measurement of national wealth. The commission will also identify key research and knowledge needs and look at how relevant knowledge best can be made available to public and private decision makers in Norway.

Mandate of the commission:

[http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/36907468/English\\_translation\\_of\\_the\\_full\\_mandate\\_for\\_the\\_expert\\_commission.pdf](http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/36907468/English_translation_of_the_full_mandate_for_the_expert_commission.pdf)

Adoption and implementation of the Nature Diversity Act (2009) is also relevant in this context.

### **Protected area capacity**

Goal 3.2: To build capacity for the planning, establishment and management of protected areas

Planning processes for establishing new protected areas are led by the county Governors at the local and regional level and by the Directorate for Nature Management at the national level, within the framework established by the Ministry of the Environment pursuant to national policies outlined in white papers and propositions to the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament).

The management responsibility for many protected areas is held by the County Governors and for some areas it is transferred to the municipalities. The management responsibility for national parks and other large protected areas is now being transferred to local “management boards”, which are under rapid establishment.

The Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management is the national executive and advisory management authority for protected areas, which includes regulatory and management responsibilities for protected areas.

The Norwegian Nature Inspectorate (SNO) was set up in 1998 and is part of the The Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management, pursuant to the Nature Inspectorate Act.

Important tasks for the inspectorate are to control, inform about, advice on, map and care for protected areas incl. practical measures. The inspectorate has a central administrative unit based at the directorate in Trondheim and more than 50 local offices dispersed around the country. The staff has more than doubled the last five years, and is still evolving rapidly.

Annual conferences on protected areas, including representatives from management authorities in Norway, are arranged by The Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management. Courses on the Nature Diversity Act for municipalities and sector authorities are arranged by the directorate and the County Governors. Furthermore, different courses on practical management measures area arranged by The Norwegian Nature Inspectorate.

Relevant publication:

Report to the Ministry of the Environment: Action plan for sustainable use and management of PAs:

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/500041427/Rapport-til-Miljoverndepartementet.-Handlingsplan-for-barekraftig-bruk-forvaltning-og-skjotsel-av-verneomrader>

### **Appropriate technology**

Goal 3.3: To develop, apply and transfer appropriate technologies for protected areas

Norway is working on improved database-solutions to store, transfer and analyze information on protected areas. Reference is also made to the new national management system (mentioned below).

### **Sustainable finance**

Goal 3.4: To ensure financial sustainability of protected areas and national and regional systems of protected areas

Financial resources are canalized through the national budget, on the basis of annual budgetary propositions from the Ministry of the Environment to the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament). National targets and indicators are defined in the national budget.

Relevant publication:

Report to the Ministry of the Environment: Action plan for sustainable use and management of Pas (only NO):

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/500041427/Rapport-til-Miljoverndepartementet.-Handlingsplan-for-barekraftig-bruk-forvaltning-og-skjotsel-av-verneomrader>

### **Education and public awareness**

Goal 3.5: To strengthen communication, education and public awareness

Over the recent years there has been an increased focus on education and public awareness.



Today 15 national park centers are authorized by the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management. An equivalent arrangement for other nature information centers, for instance wetland information centers, will be implemented in 2012. A common strategy for all the nature information centers is under development.

In September 2011 a national CEPA Action Plan for wetlands was published (valid from 2011-2014). The objective of the CEPA action plan for wetlands is to contribute to strengthening of the communication, education, participation and awareness related to the value of wetlands and the Ramsar Convention in Norway. The CEPA (Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness) concept is adopted from the CEPA program under the Ramsar Convention on wetlands. The objective of the action plan is to improve the conservation and wise use of wetlands in Norway by increasing the knowledge of the value of wetlands for humans and biodiversity.

A section for nature interpretation (under the Norwegian Nature Inspectorate) was established in 2010, and is now increasing the staff of nature interpreters educated to communicate knowledge about nature and the relationships within it. The objective is to promote insight, respect, commitment and care and consideration for the natural and cultural environment. Special attention is given to children and youths, through a common Nordic project financed by the Nordic Council.

The Natural Satchel (Den naturlige skolesekken) is a project aimed at increasing the awareness of nature, the environment and sustainable development in primary and secondary school. Schools and organizations can apply for funding for implementing projects where the education is moved out of the classroom to the outdoor environment. The project intends to develop curiosity and knowledge about nature and the environment among pupils and teachers. The Natural Satchel was initiated in 2008 by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Education and Research and is still ongoing (at least until 2014). The Natural Satchel will help to exploit the school community as a learning arena and use different regional and national resources. This means that it should pave the way for the extended use of voluntary organizations expertise, and thereby contributing to making learning more relevant and updated.

Relevant link:

News - "Stories from the Norwegian nature":

<http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/md/tema/naturmangfold/stories-from-the-norwegian-nature.html?id=652042>

### **Minimum standards, Management effectiveness and Monitoring**

Goal 4.1: To develop and adopt minimum standards and best practices for national and regional protected area systems

General guidelines are presented in handbook for "Protected Area and management" (only NO):

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/1191/Omradevern-og-forvaltning>

A national management system/framework for protected areas is under implementation. The system includes management plans with conservation objectives, management measures (practical management), monitoring and reporting. The ambition is that the system can function as a “quality cycle”, where monitoring and review of the plan ensures that all parts are appropriate, realistic, efficient and effective. Furthermore, the ambition is that the continuous nature of the process ensures that the resulting management is flexible and can adapt to changing circumstances.

Other monitoring programs which provide essential science based knowledge of very high importance for protected areas are:

Terrestrial nature monitoring (TOV):

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/409/Terrestrisk-naturovervaking-TOV>

Monitoring of palsa mires:

<http://www.dirnat.no/naturmangfold/overvaking/land/palsmyr/>

Monitoring of mountain vegetation (GLORIA):

<http://www.dirnat.no/naturmangfold/overvaking/land/gloria/>

Monitoring of freshwater:

<http://www.dirnat.no/naturmangfold/naturovervaking/ferskvann/>

## **Research**

Goal 4.4: To ensure that scientific knowledge contributes to the establishment and effectiveness of protected areas and protected area systems

According to the Nature Diversity Act, decisions that affect biodiversity shall be based on scientific knowledge. (The authorities shall also take into consideration traditional knowledge.)

The need for scientific knowledge is carefully considered in work related to establishment and effectiveness of protected areas.

Important scientific based information is also supplied by the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre (NIBC): <http://www.biodiversity.no/frontpage.aspx?m=23>

This includes:

- The Norwegian Red List of species (2010)
- The Norwegian Red List of nature types (2011)
- The Norwegian Black List of alien species (2007, new list expected in 2012)
- New division of Norwegian nature types.

Relevant reports:

Scientific evaluation of Norwegian Protected Areas (NINA Rapport 535):

<http://www.dirnat.no/multimedia/46143/NINArapp535-verneevaluering.pdf&contentdisposition=attachment>

Report "Nature in change":

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/500039880/Natur-i-endring>

## **Opportunities for marine protection**

Today 2 % of Norway's territorial waters are protected according to the old Nature Conservation Act and the new Nature Diversity Act. Most of the protected areas along the coast are protected as seabird reserves and wetland reserves. There are also some protected landscapes and some national parks.

Norway is working on a national plan for marine protected areas (phase 1), which includes 36 areas ranging in size from 5 to 3450 km<sup>2</sup>. Together with existing protected areas, the 36 areas cover approximately 10 % of the territorial waters and 0.5 % of the Norwegian EEZ.

A main objective for the plan is to secure a representative selection of nature types and habitats for future generations. The 36 proposed areas are regarded as a representative and balanced selection of marine nature from the Norwegian coastal and territorial waters. The areas range from the County of Østfold in the south to Finnmark in the North, and from the inner fiords to the outer shelf and continental slope. In addition, protection of distinctive qualities and reference areas for research and monitoring are important objectives. The formal planning process for 17 of the 36 areas included in the plan was started in 2009. The formal planning process for the remaining 19 areas commence in 2012.

The above mentioned figures do not include Svalbard and Jan Mayen. Today 87 % of the territorial waters of Svalbard are protected as national parks and nature reserves according to the Svalbard Environmental Act, and more than 99 % of the territorial waters of Jan Mayen are protected as a nature reserve according to the Jan Mayen Act.

A phase 2 in the work with marine protected areas is to consider a total need for protection of marine nature in Norwegian sea areas also including offshore areas.

## **Incorporate climate change aspects into protected areas**

Efforts are made to integrate climate change issues into all work related to nature management where it is considered to be relevant, including protected areas.

Actions against effects of climate change are described in:

<http://www.dirnat.no/content/479/Klimaendringer---tilpasninger-og-tiltak-i-naturforvaltningen>

In this report, the Directorate for Nature Management presents possible remedial actions within nature management against effects of climate change. Different kinds of efforts are discussed and considered within the areas *Sustainable use and protection of biological diversity* and *Outdoor activities*. These include planning, management decision, physical efforts, changes in laws/regulations, information, counseling, corporation, monitoring, research and development. Adaptations and actions related to protected areas, are dealt with in the report.

The report is based on a report which synthesizes a number of studies on climate effects in Norway, and draws some conclusions about the anticipated changes in the future.

The Norwegian Climate Change Adaption Programme is also relevant in this context:

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/md/kampanjer/engelsk-forside-for-klimatilpasning.html?id=539980>

Yours sincerely,



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