24 October 2022

Guidelines for using the Excel template for conservation status pledges
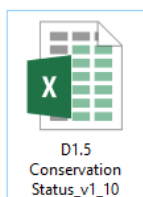
Content

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Introduction

These guidelines explain how to use the Excel template for reporting conservation status (CS) pledges. The use of Reportnet 3 for the reporting is explained in the 'Technical guidelines for the use of Reportnet 3 for conservation status pledges'.

Excel template for conservation status pledges

D1.5 Conservation Status_v1_10

- ✓ Can be downloaded in the Member State's dedicated area on Reportnet 3
- ✓ Helps to organise and record information on CS pledges
- ✓ Contains the Member State specific lists of habitats and species and all necessary code lists
- ✓ Via tool tips, provides guidance for editing e.g. requested data format or field description
- ✓ It is the mean of submitting the pledges data to Reportnet 3.

Structure of the pledge template

The format for conservation status pledges[1] contains four sections ('sub-targets'), each related to a specific expected achievement under the broader conservation status objective of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030:

1. 30% target for improving status and trends,
2. target for halting deterioration,
3. achieving non-deterioration is unlikely and
4. reducing unknowns.

For each of the four sub-targets, Member States are requested to provide a list of relevant habitats and species together with complementary information – these are organised in distinct sections in the format (sections a-d).

In the Excel template for conservation status pledges, the information corresponding to each section of the pledges format is being stored in a separate data tab. Where the information is requested for habitats or species, there are separate data tabs for entering the information on habitats and species (from the Habitats Directive), and on birds (from the Birds Directive). The schema in Figure 1 illustrates the link between the sections of the pledge format and data tabs in Excel template.

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[1] Format for the status improvement target:
https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/6f30d1d2-d6f2-4c6e-a4dc-1feb66201929/library/395c7cde-e2c4-40b0-9afc-638a214d6b39/details

Figure 1 - Schema illustrating the link between the sections of the pledge format (blue boxes) and the tabs in the Excel template (yellow- information requested for habitats and species (Habitats Directive), brown - information requested for bird species (Birds Directive), grey - information provided globally under each pledge

30% target for improving trends

1a. Identification of the habitat or species:	1b. Information on the criteria used for selecting the habitat or species	1c. Information on the measures required to achieve an improvement by 2030	1d. Any additional information
No specific tab	TAB: 1.b IMPR CRIT Habitats&Species	TAB: 1.c IMPR MEAS	TAB: 1.d IMPR Other
	TAB: 1.b IMPR CRIT Birds	TAB: 1.c IMPR MEAS	

Non-deterioration target

2a. Identification of the habitat or species:	2b. Information on the measures required to halt deterioration by 2030	2c. Any additional information
No specific tab	TAB: 2.b NON-DET MEAS	TAB: 2.c NON-DET Other
	TAB: 1.c 2.b NON-DET MEAS	

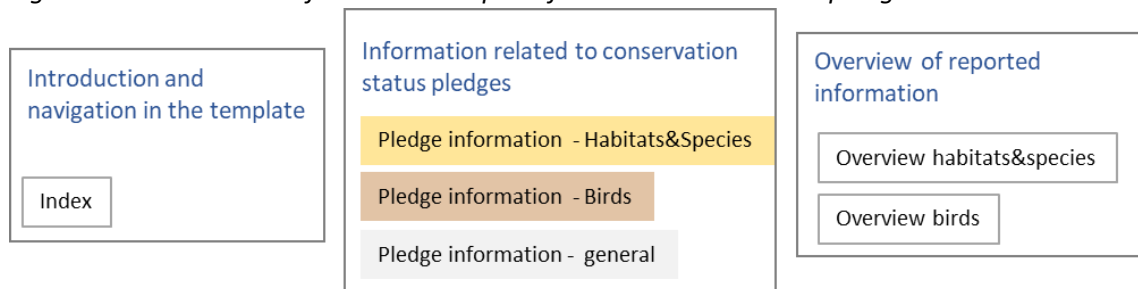## Non-deterioration unlikely to be achievable

3a. Identification of the habitat or species:	3.b Information on non-achieving a non-deterioration target	3.c Need for measures in other Member States or outside EU	3.d Additional information
No specific tab	TAB: 3.b DET UNAV Habitats&Species	TAB: 3.c OUTS MEAS	TAB: 3.d DET OUTS – Other
	TAB: 3.b DET UNAV Birds	TAB: 3.c OUTS MEAS	

Reducing unknowns

4a. Identification of the habitat or species:	4.a' Reasons for the unknown/uncertain assessment of status and/or trend in the	4.b Description of the measures	4.c Additional information
No specific tab	4.a UNKN Reasons Habitats&Speci	4.b UNKN	4.c UNKN Other
	4.a UNKN Reasons Birds		

Together with data tabs for entering the pledge information, the Excel template contains one 'Index' tab with general introduction and navigation options, and two 'Overview' tabs (see Figure 2)

Figure 2 - The structure of the Excel template for conservation status pledges

Hands on guide for using the pledge template

The Excel template with Member States specific checklists and all necessary code lists can be downloaded in the Member State's dedicated area (envelope) on Reportnet 3.

In the Excel template, each tab (see Figure 3) contains a short description (from the pledge format) of the information to be filled in. Further instructions are provided on the tool tips on the headings of columns (on mouse over). Colours of fields indicate the data format, for example yellow colour is used for fields where the information is inserted using drop down menus.

Figure 3 - Each tab (see Figure 3) contains a short description of the information expected in the tab (1). Further details are on the tool tips (2). Colours of fields indicate the data format (3).

Biogeographical/marine region	Habitat or Species	Criteria	For each habitat or species select one or several criteria from the drop-down list.
Alpine	H-6150-Siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands	Biodiversity-related criteria	
Alpine	H-6210-Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)	Biodiversity-related criteria	
Continental	H-6210-Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)	Biodiversity-related criteria	
Alpine	H-6240-Sub-Pannonic steppic grasslands	Synergies with other environmental or climate targets - additional information	
Continental	H-6240-Sub-Pannonic steppic grasslands	Synergies with other environmental or climate targets - additional information	
Black Sea	H-6220-Pseudo-steppe with grasses and annuals of the Thero-Brachypodietea	Biodiversity-related criteria	

Identifying habitats and species for each sub-target

There is no separate tab to list the habitats and species under each of four sub-targets (corresponding to sections : 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a 'Identification of the habitat or species' of the pledge format). To identify the habitats and species under each sub-target reporter should fill in directly the data tab(s).

Any habitat or species included in the data tabs corresponding to one of four sub-targets (see Figure 1) will be taken as selected for that target. For example for 30% target for improving status and trends all habitats and species included in two data tabs: '1.b IMPR CRIT Habitats&Species' and '1.c IMPR MEAS Habitats&Species' are taken as being proposed for that target.

The Excel template has two 'overview' tabs ('Overview Habitats&Species' for habitats and species (Habitats Directive), and 'Overview Birds' for birds) which provide a summary of the information from the previous data tabs, see Figure 4 (the overview tabs count the number of lines entered for each habitat or species in the previous data tabs). Using the overview tabs the reporter can check habitats and species listed under each of four 'sub-targets'.

> **Tips and trick**
>
> *For checking and filtering the overview table, copy and paste each time needed the entire table into an empty Excel file or empty sheet. The overview tables in the Excel pledge template are 'frozen' – it is not possible to filter or sort the records.*

The Excel template does not assure that the pledges dataset is coherent as a whole - information for each section of the pledges format and for each sub-target is provided separately in a separate data tab. Checks of the dataset integrity, like for example:

- checking whether the same species / region combination is not provided under both '30% sub-target for improving trends' and 'non-deterioration sub-target', or
- checking that each conservation measure is just listed once for a habitat or species, or
- checking that only habitats and species in non-favourable status/non-secure status are included under 30% target for improving trends

are assured to a limited extent on Reportnet 3.

Figure 4 - The overview tab for habitats and species count the number of lines in the data tabs corresponding to section of the pledge format (in the screen shot below only the first four data tabs are shown). The reporter can check quickly using the overview tab which habitats and species are induced in the pledge. In the screen shot below habitats: 6150 /Alpine, 6210 /Alpine and Continental and 6220 / Black sea and Continental are listed under the 30% target for improving trends and habitats 6210 Black sea and 6220 Alpine for Non-deterioration target. The overview tab help to perform quick visual consistency checks, in the screen shot below for example under 30% target for improving trends habitat 6220 / Black sea is only included in tab 1.b IMPR CRIT Habitats&Species but no conservation measures are provided in 1.c IMPR MEAS Habitats&Species

Name and code of the species/habitat type	National biogeographical/marine region	National biogeographical/marine region conservation status in 2019	National biogeographical/marine region conservation status trend in 2019	1.b IMPR CRIT Habitats & Species	1.c IMPR MEAS Habitats & Species	2.b NON-DET MEAS Habitats & Species	3.b DET UNAV Habitats & Species
H-6110-Rupicolous calcareous or basophilic grasslands of the Alysso-Sedion albi	Alpine	U1	Unknown (x)	0	0	0	0
H-6150-Siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands	Alpine	U1	Unknown (x)	1	3	0	0
H-6150-Siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands	Continental	U1	Stable (=)	0	0	0	0
H-6170-Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands	Alpine	XX	NULL	0	0	0	0
H-6210-Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)	Alpine	U1	Unknown (x)	1	4	0	0
H-6210-Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)	Continental	U1	Unknown (x)	1	7	0	0
H-6210-Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)	Black Sea	U1	Unknown (x)	0	0	4	0
H-6220-Pseudo-steppe with grasses and annuals of the Thero-Brachypodietea	Alpine	U1	Unknown (x)	0	0	3	0
H-6220-Pseudo-steppe with grasses and annuals of the Thero-Brachypodietea	Black Sea	U1	Unknown (x)	1	0	0	0
H-6220-Pseudo-steppe with grasses and annuals of the Thero-Brachypodietea	Continental	U1	Unknown (x)	0	2	0	0
H-6230-Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)	Continental	U1	Unknown (x)	0	0	0	0
H-6230-Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)	Alpine	U1	Unknown (x)	0	0	0	0

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Overview tabs help to visualise the dataset as a whole and so to check some consistency issues quickly before uploading the data into Reportnet 3 (see Figure 3). Reporters are advised to verify manually:

- that all habitats and species are included under the relevant sub-target as specified in the format for pledges and the Commission's guidance document (a summary of these requirements is provided in the Box 1)

- for the sections which contain two data tabs ('30% target for improving trends' and 'non-deterioration unlikely to be achievable') check that the same habitats and species are listed in both data tabs

Box 1 - Summary of the guidance for listing habitats and species under each of four sub-targets

1) Identification of habitats/species for national pledging in relation to the 30% target for improving status (or at least showing a strong positive trend) by 2030	This section can include: • any species or habitat that was not reported as being in favourable conservation status (FCS) in 2019 • any birds species that is not assessed as "Secure" in the EU-level assessment of 2020 • exceptions specified in the Commission's document[2]
2) Identification of habitats/species for national pledging in relation to the target for halting deterioration by 2030	This section shall be provided for each habitat or species showing a negative conservation status trend or population trend, and not selected for a pledge for improvement above. In addition, the information can be provided also for habitats and species with non-favourable, non-secure status and with stable, positive or unknown trends, especially if measures are planned to prevent the deterioration.
3) Information to be provided for habitats/species for which achieving non-deterioration is considered to be fully or partially outside of the control of the Member State	This section shall be provided for each habitat or species considered to be falling into this situation,
4) Information to be provided for those habitats/species for which status and/or trend was reported as "unknown" or "uncertain" in the 2019 reporting	This section shall be provided for all habitats/species for which status and/or trend was reported as "unknown" or "uncertain"

Listing habitats and species in data tables

The relevant data tabs in the Excel template contain drop-down menus to facilitate listing the habitats and species (see Figure 5). The Excel template downloaded in the Member State's dedicated area on Reportnet 3 is tailored to each Member State; it includes only the biogeographical regions within that Member State and the habitats and species reported for each region in the 2019 Article 17 reporting. The same applies to birds species; the templates only contain the lists of breeding, wintering and passage birds from the 2019 Article 12 reporting.

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[2] The guidance on the status improvement targets is available in Circabc, on https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/6f30d1d2-d6f2-4c6e-a4dc-1feb66201929/library/bd8a2cd4-f774-4574-bd88-0b1fa012b725/details

Figure 5 - The data tabs in the Excel template contain Member State-specific drop-down menus for entering the information on region and habitats or species names (or season and species names for birds)

Under different sections of the pledge format the reporter can select several entries for the same habitat/species and region/season combination; for example, the reporter can list several conservation measures in the section '2.b Information on the measures required to halt deterioration by 2030 for habitats and species' or several reasons under '3.b Information on non-achieving a non-deterioration target for habitats and species'. Regions or season and habitat or species names need to be repeated for each entry - each line in the Excel template need to have a region or season and habitats or species name assigned (see Figure 6)

Figure 6 - When providing multiple entries (several 'measures' or several 'reasons'), the region or season and the habitat or species name need to be repeated for each entry - each line in the Excel template. For example, in the screen shot below, the reporter has selected 6 conservation measures for Falco cherug. The 'season' and 'species name' is repeated for each measure listed.

Tips and trick

When providing multiple entries (several 'measures' or several 'reasons'), the region or season and the habitat or species name need to be repeated for each entry. To facilitate editing you can copy and paste 'region' & 'species name' cells.

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Reporting measures for 30% sub-target for improving status and for halting deterioration sub-target

Under the '30% sub-target for improving trends' and 'Non-deterioration sub-target', reporters are expected to provide 'Information on measures required'; this includes the conservation measures, a qualitative and quantitative description of each measure, a date by which significant part of measures will be completed and an explanation on the sufficiency of measures.

For listing the conservation measures, a specific code list including 22 general measures has been developed (see Annex A).

In the pledge format the 'date' and 'explanation' on sufficiency of measures shall address jointly all planned measures for a habitat/species within a region/season. Despite this, the Excel template contains distinct fields for entering this information for each measure (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 - Tab for recording the information on conservation measures. For each habitat/species the reporter shall fill in the list of conservation measures. The description of the measure shall be reported separately for each measure listed. For date and explanation the reporter can either provide a common estimation covering all measurers for a habitats/species and region/season combination (as for H 6150 in Alpine) or provide these separately for each measure (as for H-6210 in Alpine)

Biogeographical/marine region	Habitat or Species	Measure	Description of the measure	Date	Explanation
Alpine	H-6150-Siliceous alpine	MP03 - Regulatory	descritpion for MP03	12/2026	explanation for MP03&MP07&MP01
Alpine	H-6150-Siliceous alpine	MP07 - Improve	descritpion for MP07	12/2026	joint explanation
Alpine	H-6150-Siliceous alpine	MP01 - Securing area	descritpion for MP01	12/2026	joint explanation
Alpine	H-6210-Semi-natural dry	MP03 - Regulatory	descritpion for MP03	12/2026	explanation for MP03
Alpine	H-6210-Semi-natural dry	MP07 - Improve	descritpion for MP07	12/2028	explanation for MP07
Alpine	H-6210-Semi-natural dry	MP01 - Securing area	descritpion for MP01	06/2028	explanation for MP01
Alpine	H-6210-Semi-natural dry	MP06 - Improve	descritpion for MP06	06/2029	explanation for MP06
Continental	H-6210-Semi-natural dry	MP03 - Regulatory	descritpion for MP03	12/2026	explanation for MP03&MP07&MP01
Continental	H-6210-Semi-natural dry	MP07 - Improve	descritpion for MP07	12/2026	joint explanation
Continental	H-6210-Semi-natural dry	MP01 - Securing area	descritpion for MP01	12/2026	joint explanation

When recording the date and explanation on sufficiency of measures in the Excel template the reporter can follow one of these options

- assess the 'date' and 'explanation' jointly for all measures reported for a habitat/species in the region/season and a) insert the same date for each of the measures listed and b) provide the explanation text only for one of reported measure and indicate 'joint explanation' for remaining measures (description shall be provided for each measure listed)
- assess and provide the 'date' and 'explanation' separately for each of the measures reported for a habitat/species in the region/season (description shall be provided for each measure listed)
- combination of these, e.g. assess date separately but provide explanation jointly.

Providing free text explanations, descriptions and other information

When entering a free text information (e.g. explanation for criteria for selecting habitats or species for 30% improvement target) the following guidance apply:

- text shall be provided in English as far as possible and using Latin alphabet
- the free text field have limit for maximum number of characters - 4000. The Excel template do not have a restriction to limit the text fields to 4000 character, but longer texts will be truncated in later stage, when processing the pledge data.
- when typing in the cell do not use the carriage return, as that would take you to another cell in the table. Only one cell in the Excel file can be used in each case. If you would like to have separate paragraphs within your explanation, use 'Alt-Enter' rather than just 'Enter' at the end of each paragraph.

Reporting 'new' habitats and species

Together with the Excel template containing the Member States checklists from the 2019 reporting there is also a template for reporting new (additional) species or habitats. This is to be used in case Member States wishes to include under their pledge a re-established habitat or reintroduced species or any habitat or species which was not reported for that biogeographical region or season in the 2019 reporting.

In the 'New species' template the fields for listing the habitats or species code and name do not have a dropdown list with this information, but are free text fields. Ideally, the habitat / species name and code is provided in the same format as in the prefilled file (Figure 8). The habitats and species codes are available in the EEA's data dictionaries for the nature reporting[3]

Figure 8 - Format for entering habitats and species named and code for new habitats and species.

Habitat or Species
S-Astacus astacus-1091
S-Austropotamobius torrentium-1093
H-6150-Siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands
H-3160-Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds

Pledges for subnational territories of Spain and Portugal for bird species

As for the Article 12 reporting for Spain and Portugal separate reporting for subnational units (the Azores (Portugal), Madeira (Portugal) and the Canary Islands (Spain)) applies also for conservation status pledges. In technical terms, a separate Excel template shall be filled in for Azores, Madeira and the Canary Island (only including the birds species occurring in these territories; this is not relevant for habitats and species of the Habitats Directive). These Excel templates will need to be submitted using specific envelopes on Reportnet 3.

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[3] Article 17 http://dd.eionet.europa.eu/vocabularies?expand=true&expanded=&folderId=30#folder-30
Article 12 http://dd.eionet.europa.eu/vocabularies?expand=true&expanded=30&folderId=31#folder-31

Annex A   The list of conservation measures for reporting the conservation status pledges.

Code	Name of the measure	Description
MP01	Securing area for habitat maintenance/restoration through land purchase or definitive acquisition of use rights	Such measures may cover land, marine or freshwater areas
MP02	Securing area for long-term habitat maintenance or restoration, through lease or transfer of rights	Such measures may cover land, marine or freshwater areas
MP03	Regulatory approaches to reduce external pressures or exploitation (such as pollution, water abstraction, marine bottom trawling, etc.) impacting on Annex I or species' habitats	Examples include regulations that limit land use changes, land use intensification or water abstraction, a ban on bottom trawling, the designation of no-take zones, limitations to ammonium emissions, limitations to certain hunting or fishing-related practises, etc. Regulatory approaches to land use may either cover entire areas or individual features (such as a requirement to leave a certain number of trees per hectare as dead-wood features, a ban on removing hedges or trees from farmland, etc.).
MP04	Re-establish new areas of Annex I habitats or species' habitats through active area-based restoration measures	This concerns areas that do not currently qualify as Annex I or species' habitats, including land, marine or freshwater areas. The measures are typically one-off interventions or restoration works, that do not need to be repeated regularly on the same areas (as opposed to recurring management measures, which are covered elsewhere)
MP05	Re-establish new areas of Annex I habitats or species' habitats through passive/non-intervention approaches	This concerns areas that do not currently qualify as Annex I or species' habitats, including land, marine or freshwater areas.
MP06	Improve condition of existing habitats (either Annex I or species' habitats) through active area-based restoration measures	This concerns areas that qualify already as Annex I or species' habitats, including land, marine or freshwater areas. The measures are typically one-off interventions or restoration works, that do not need to be repeated regularly on the same areas (as opposed to recurring management measures, which are covered elsewhere)
MP07	Improve condition of existing habitats (either Annex I or species' habitats) through passive/non-intervention approaches	This concerns areas that qualify already as Annex I or species' habitats, including land, marine or freshwater areas.
MP08	Continuation of recurring habitat management practises	Measures may include the continuation of existing biodiversity-friendly agricultural or forestry management practises, the active maintenance of landscape features such as hedges, the continuation of prescribed burning on heathlands, ...
MP09	Adaptation of recurring habitat management practises	Measures may include adaptations to ongoing grazing or mowing practises, modifications to prescribed burning, etc.
MP10	Reinstatement of recurring habitat management practises	This covers both situations where abandoned management practises need to be reinstated, and situation where recurring management is needed on new re-established habitats. Possible examples include the reinstatement of regular grazing or mowing practises on land that has been subject to agricultural abandonment, the reinstatement of prescribed burning on abandoned heathlands, etc.
MP11	Reduce pressures on habitats or species by active measures against pollution	This covers the implementation any active measures or works required to reduce pollution pressures (as opposed to regulatory approaches)

MP12	Adapting infrastructures to reduce non-intentional killing of species, or disturbance of species or habitats	Such measures may not only cover the actual field interventions, but also any preparatory steps required, post-intervention monitoring, etc. Examples include the adaptation of hydro-power dams to facilitate fish migration, measures to prevent electrocution of birds on powerlines, measures to reduce or avoid collision with windfarms, vehicles or buildings, the placement or adaptation of visitor guidance infrastructures to avoid habitat deterioration from trampling, etc ...
MP13	Improve law enforcement, to better prevent or control of illegal activities	Measures may include the prevention or control of illegal activities such as poaching or killing, illegal logging or collection of species, as well as actions to strengthen persecution, etc.
MP14	Prevent, control, eradicate or mitigate negative impacts of native predators or competitors	Such measures may not only cover the actual field interventions for controlling or eradicating IAS species, but also any preparatory steps required, post-intervention monitoring, etc. Examples may include the control of native predators (such as foxes) to improve the breeding success of meadow bird species, etc.
MP15	Prevent, control, eradicate or mitigate negative impacts of Invasive alien (plant or animal) species	Such measures may not only cover the actual field interventions for controlling or eradicating IAS species, but also any preparatory steps required, post-intervention monitoring, etc.
MP16	Prevent, control, eradicate or mitigate negative impacts of plant and animal diseases, pathogens and parasites other than IAS	Such measures may not only cover the actual field interventions, but also any preparatory steps required, post-intervention monitoring, etc. Examples of measures may includes measures to contain amphibian fungal disease outbreaks or the spread of fungal crayfish disease, the removal of diseased individuals from the wild, etc.
MP17	Reintroduction or population re-inforcement of protected target species	Such measures may cover any steps required for ex-situ breeding and reintroduction operations, include the initial capture or collection of the targeted species (which may either be an animal or a plant species), the set-up and running of ex-situ breeding operations, the selection of release sites and release operations, monitoring of release individuals, etc.
MP18	Adapting existing or providing supplementary infrastructures to facilitate reproduction, resting or feeding of protected target species	Such measures may not only cover the actual field interventions, but also any research or preparatory steps required, post-intervention monitoring, etc. Examples include the placement of artificial breeding platforms or nest boxes
MP19	Supplementary feeding of target species	Examples include the provision of rabbits to boost population of Iberian lynx and other protected predators, the provision of carcasses to vultures, etc.
MP20	Prevent, mitigate or compensate damages caused by the protected target species, to improve its acceptance by stakeholders	Such measures may not only cover the actual field interventions, but also any preparatory steps required, post-intervention monitoring, etc. Examples include livestock protection measures to prevent damages caused by large carnivores, compensatory payments for damages incurred by cormorants or otters, diversionary feeding to draw protected species away from problem activities or locations, etc.
MP21	Improve or restore connectivity	Please only select "Improve restore connectivity" if other selected measures for that habitat or species are related to a dedicated and intentional policy objective for improving or restoring connectivity.
MP22	(Other) measures not covered elsewhere	