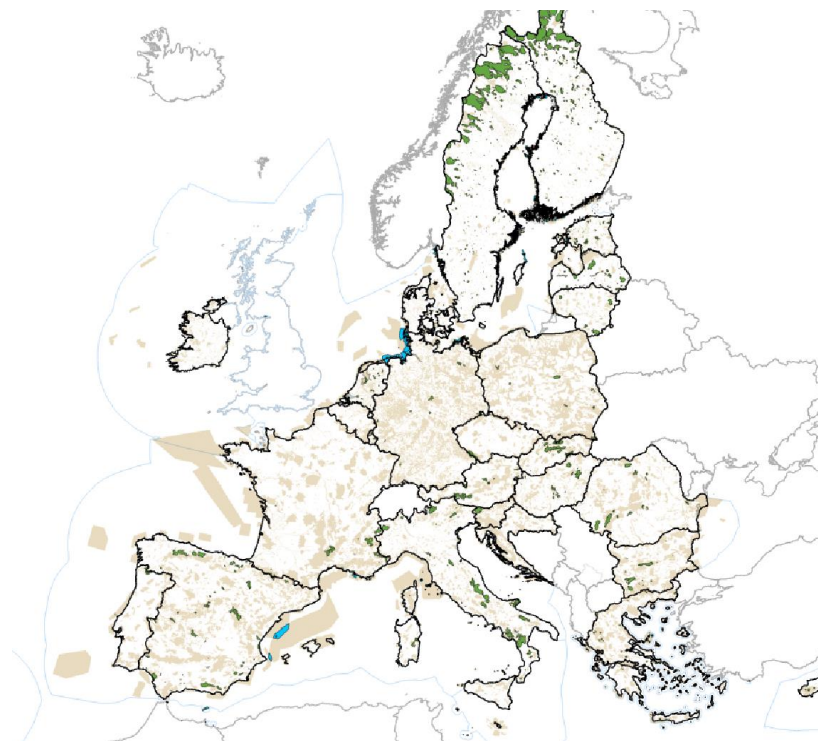


The Value of Green Infrastructure and protected areas



Policy

At the national, EU and global level there are a number of policies concerning green infrastructure and protected areas. Two of the key policies are the **EU Biodiversity Strategy** published in May 2020 and the **Global Biodiversity Framework** which is being discussed and will be adopted in April next year at the Biodiversity CoP.

The **EU Biodiversity Strategy** for 2030 lays out targeted action to put Europe on the path to ecological recovery within the next decade.

A key element of this Strategy is to protect a minimum of **30%** of the EU's Land and **30%** of the EU's sea area, with 1/3 strictly protected.

The post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework by the CBD, to be agreed at Kunming in 2022, will likely have a **30by30** target, that is in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

Both of these feed into a **2050** vision as well as an integrated land/seascape vision.

Protected Areas

Current coverage of protected areas..

EU 27

25.7% of land

11.1% of ocean

Source: EEA (2020).

Protected area coverage across the world		
	Terrestrial	Marine
North America	12.45%	15.06%
Latin America	24.2%	23.05%
Africa	14.1%	12.35%
Asia-Pacific	15.37%	18.56%
West Asia	3.82%	1.11%
Global	15.66%	7.66%

Source: UNEP-WCMC (2021). World Database of Protected Areas, May 2021

Policy

To achieve this 2030 and 2050 vision it requires that we consider not “just” protected areas but other features that help us connect, **protect** and **restore** our nature using green and blue infrastructure.

Green infrastructure is a network of (semi-)natural areas which are protected and enhanced to deliver ecosystem services, while also benefiting biodiversity and society more widely.



Green Infrastructure as a connector

Europe is a **fragmented** landscape, which is a threat to our biodiversity. Around 15 % of **disconnected** Natura 2000 sites are less than 1 km apart but intersected by highways limiting species movement.

However....Around 80 % of Natura 2000 sites are **connected** by natural and semi-natural terrestrial ecosystems **outside** the Natura 2000 network

There is value in what is in protected areas but also the land around these areas. They are all part of the solution.

Value

We need to ensure that as a society we recognise the value of green infrastructure and protected areas, they both serve to **protect** and **restore** our nature.

This is very relevant for our environment today..

- We see a loss in biodiversity and a clear need to improve our nature,
- It is recognised that access to nature is beneficial to our mental and physical health
- These areas help us reduce risk to disasters,
- They amongst other benefits ..clean our air and water and provide us with food
- They mitigate the effects of climate change

The future of a healthy planet is in us **connecting** our landscape and continuing the work that this project is doing.

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