



# Copernicus & Natura 2000 land cover/ land use change detection

Policy relevance, preliminary findings & next steps

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# Natura 2000

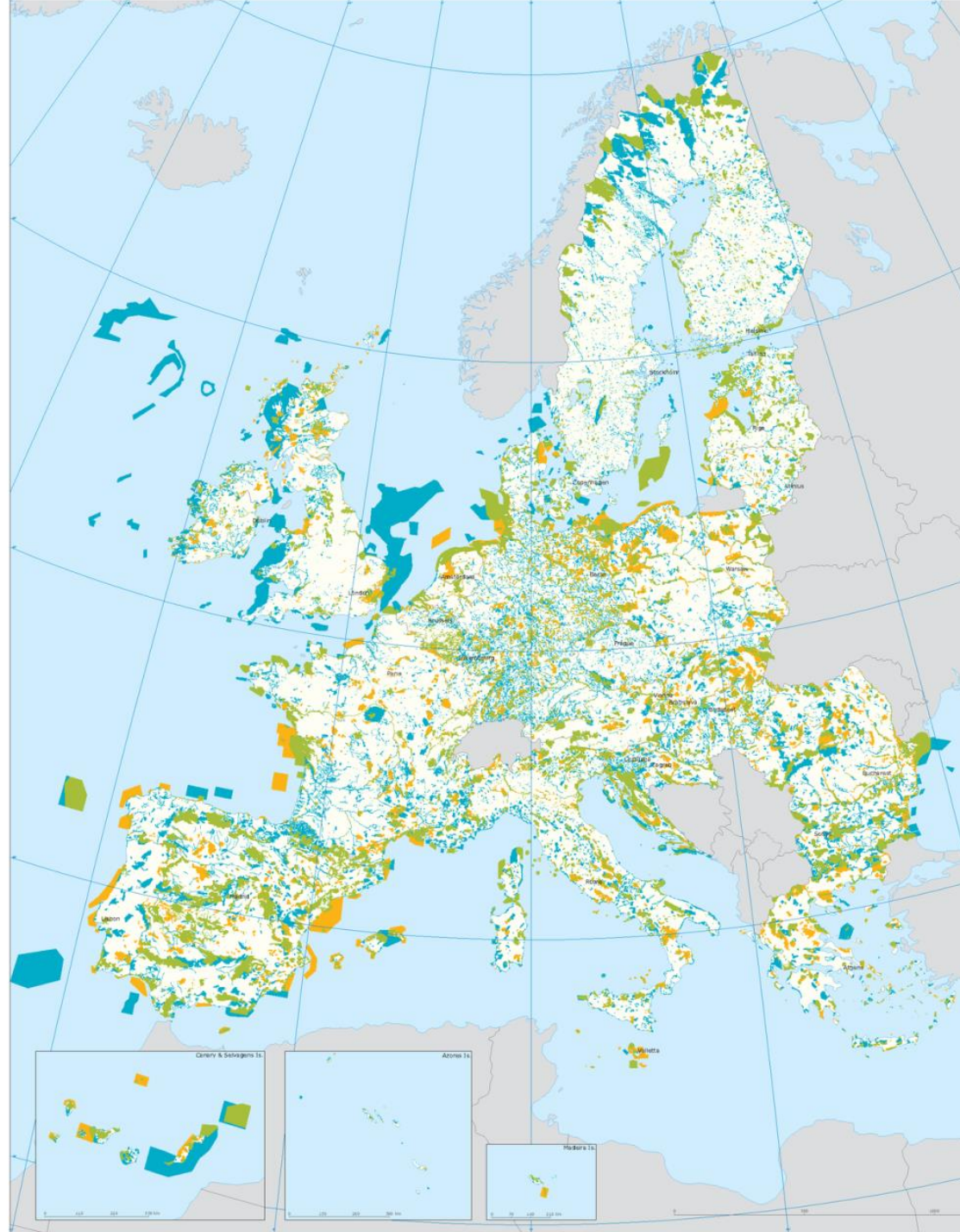
EU-wide network of protected areas set up under EU Birds & Habitats Directives

center-piece of EU nature and biodiversity policy & contribution to international obligations

a significant contribution to maintaining/restoring natural habitats and species to a favourable conservation status

- 27.500 individual sites
- 18.2 % of EU land area

<http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/>



## Questions:

- Is Natura 2000 fulfilling its objective?
- If not, what are the main drivers for deterioration & what should be done to counteract these?
- Can Copernicus help answering these questions in a systematic way?

# Natura 2000 "local land product"

thematic focus on semi-natural grasslands

2 layers: 2006 + 2012

a pilot data-set for 750 Natura 2000 sites & their surrounding 2 km "buffer" areas is published

<https://land.copernicus.eu/local/natura/>

to be extended to all grassland Natura 2000 sites by 2019 (ongoing)



The screenshot shows the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Site Map, About, Contact us, Log in, and Register. The Copernicus logo is prominently displayed, along with the text "Europe's eyes on Earth" and "Land Monitoring Service". A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the navigation bar, there is a green header with a home icon, and menu items for Global, Pan-European, Local, Reference data, and FAQ. Social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube are also present. The main content area features a large aerial photograph of a rural landscape. Below the photo, a breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: "You are here: Home / Local / Natura 2000 (N2K)".

## Natura 2000 (N2K)

[Print](#)



N2K 2006



N2K 2012

Natura 2000 (an EU-wide network of nature protection areas established under the 1992 Habitats Directive) is the centerpiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

A selection of N2K grassland-rich sites (5 grassland habitats types 6210, 6240, 6250, 6510 and 6520, including a 2km buffer and covering approx. 160.000 km<sup>2</sup>) sites was mapped in order to assess their actual area, their condition and their development over time. The sites were analysed for the 2006 and 2012 reference years and a change analysis was performed. The mapping also included a 2km buffer zone where an analysis of pressures and threats was conducted. The analysis focused on a selection of grassland (semi-natural/species rich) habitat types.

The inclusion of the remaining grassland-rich N2K sites not selected in the current exercise will be implemented in 2017-2018 and an extension to other habitat types is also foreseen and under discussion.

## **Preliminary findings (based on pilot dataset)**

### **Is Natura 2000 fulfilling its objective?**

- 2006-12, we have been losing semi-natural grasslands in Natura 2000 sites
- However, losses are 4 times larger outside than inside of the sites !

### **If not, what are the main drivers for deterioration & what should be done to counteract these?**

- At EU Level, main driver inside Natura 2000 was land abandonment
- In NW Europe, agricultural land use intensification is the main driver in the sites
- However, certain sites did not show any deterioration !

### **Can Copernicus help answering these questions in a systematic way?**

- Clearly yes ! But we are only starting to scratch on the surface !



this presentation is based on work undertaken by the  
**European Environment Agency**



in the frame of the **Copernicus programme**



( <https://land.copernicus.eu/local/natura> )