

## Example: "Sustainability Indicator for Species Diversity"

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) set a target to significantly halt the loss of biodiversity worldwide by 2010. The COP 9 in Bonn, Germany, will be the last Conference of the Contracting Parties before 2010. At the end of 2007, the German government agreed on a National Strategy on Biological Diversity, in order to protect and develop biodiversity in Germany.



### The German National Strategy on Biological Diversity

The National Strategy comprises a concrete vision how the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity should develop. In order to implement this, future-oriented quality objectives have been specified to describe the condition of biodiversity which is aspired to in the long-term. Political and social actions should focus on these quality objectives. The quality objectives have been specified through measures and action objectives.

The German government has selected indicators to estimate how successfully the National Strategy objectives will be met in the future. These indicators will render a general performance review possible. The indicators summarise the complex nature of the actual situation and make trends recognisable. Biodiversity is far too complex to be entirely quantified according to scientific standards. However, highly aggregated indicators help to compile data of important overall developments and process the data for policy advice.

Although indicators cannot completely represent all facets of biodiversity, they can indicate how important components develop. The "Sustainability Indicator for Species Diversity" (SISD) directly mirrors the quality of nature and the landscape in Germany. To calculate the indicator, the population trends of 59 selected bird species, which represent the main landscape and habitat types and land use practices in Germany, are monitored.

Population sizes of the selected bird species directly reflect the suitability of the landscape as a habitat for these species. The indicator also provides an indirect insight into the development of species diversity and the sustainability of current land use practices, as not only birds, but also many other species rely on a richly structured landscape with intact, sustainably managed habitats.

#### Overall indicator

State of nature and landscape in Germany in response to sustainable land use

(Sub-indicators are weighted with their proportion at the total surface area of Germany)

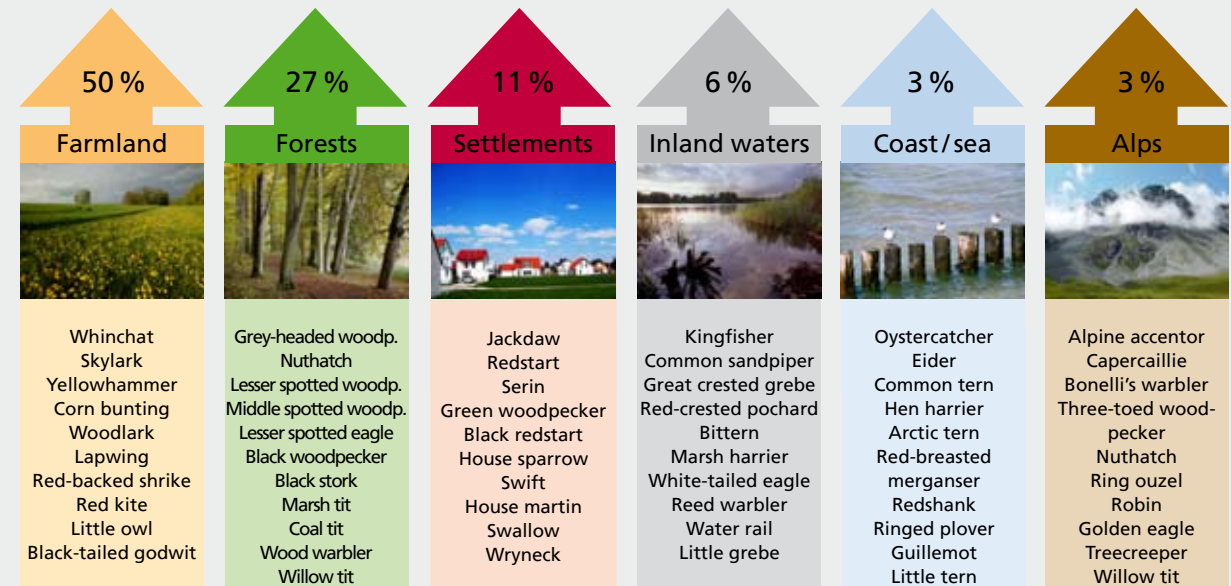
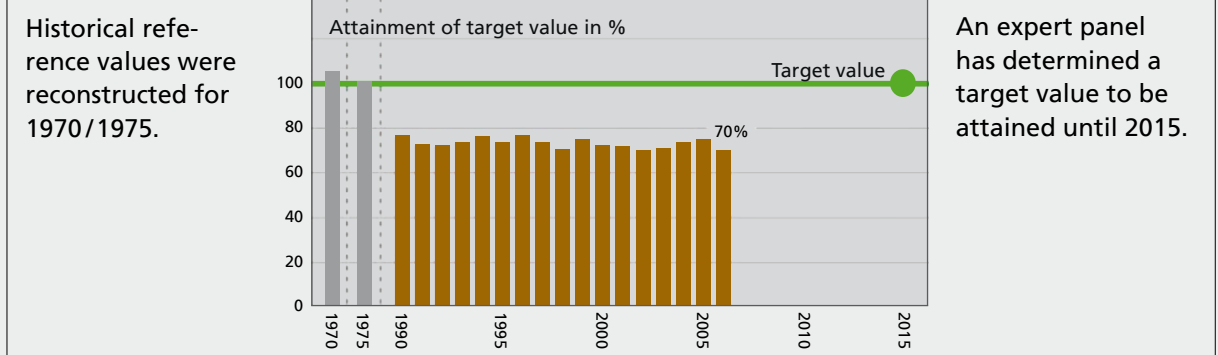
#### Sub-indicators

State of the six main habitat and landscape types in Germany

(Mean of indicator species)

#### Indicator species

Populations of representative birds with target values set for 2015 and standardised at 100 %



Source: adapted from Sukopp et al. (2007)

## Indicators Used in the National Strategy

The indicators of the National Strategy on Biological Diversity are mainly composed of reliable indicators used at national and German Länder level. Some indicators of the National Strategy refer to the proposed SEBI 2010 indicators and take CBD focal areas into account. At the moment, several new indicators are being developed for an appropriate assessment of the strategy's successes and failures in important key areas.

1	Sustainability indicator for species diversity
2	Endangered species
3	Conservation status of Habitats Directive habitat types and species
4	Number of non-native fauna and flora species in Germany
5	Size of strictly protected areas
6	Natura 2000 area designations
7	Land use: Increase in the amount of land used for human settlements and the transport infrastructure
8	Dissection of the landscape
9	Urban sprawl
10	Agro-environmental subsidy (subsidised area)
11	Organic farmland as a proportion of total agricultural land
12	Proportion of certified forest land in Germany
13	Nitrogen surplus (overall balance sheet)
14	Genetic engineering in agriculture
15	Water quality – Proportion of waterbodies with at least water quality grade II
16	Marine Trophic Index
17	Populations of selected commercial marine species
18	Flowering season of indicator plants
19	Significance of environmental policy goals and tasks

Available

In process



## Working Together

A trend reversal towards the sustainable protection of biodiversity has not been realised as of yet and the 2010 target is still a distant prospect. The indicators of the National Strategy can help with recognising the current state of development, identifying particularly topical areas of action and effectively implementing biodiversity protection measures. However, the diversity of our nature can only be assured if all major political, industrial and social players take responsibility and work together to implement the National Strategy on the long term.

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## Policy-related Indicators

Measure the Effectiveness

of the German National

Strategy on

Biological Diversity