

**LIFE Platform Meeting: Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC)
Challenges and Opportunities in Europe**

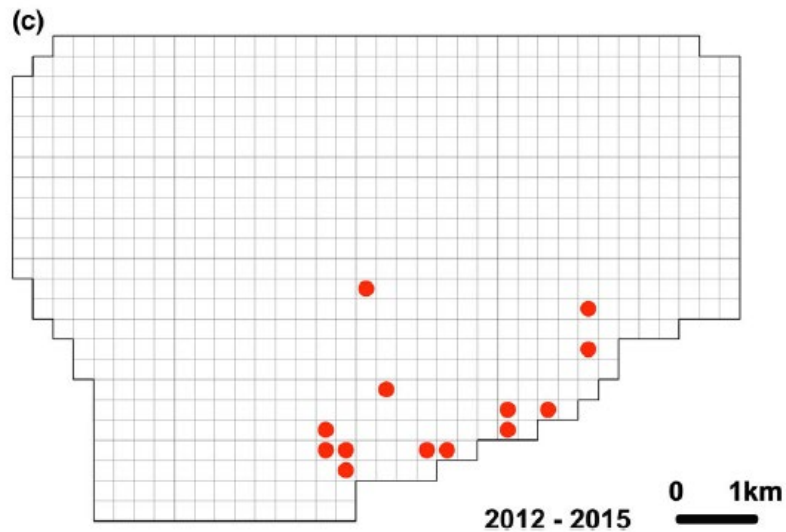
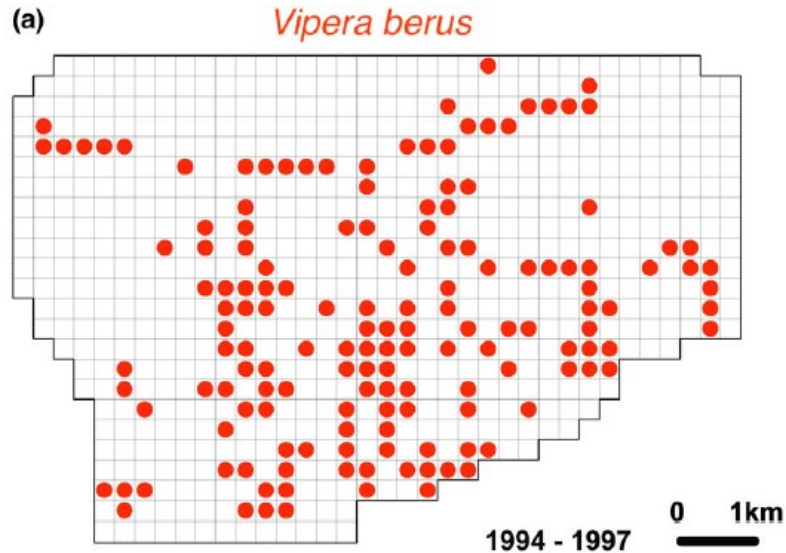
22-24 May 2024, Santander, Spain

Working group IV: EU and national policies, financing amphibian and reptile conservation

**Is Nature's recovery imperilled by a false choice
between wildlife and economy – or can we really
blame great crested newts for our economic
decline?**

Jim Foster, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust, UK

Status of European amphibians and reptiles



Guiller et al (2022) Anim. Cons. 25; 849-864

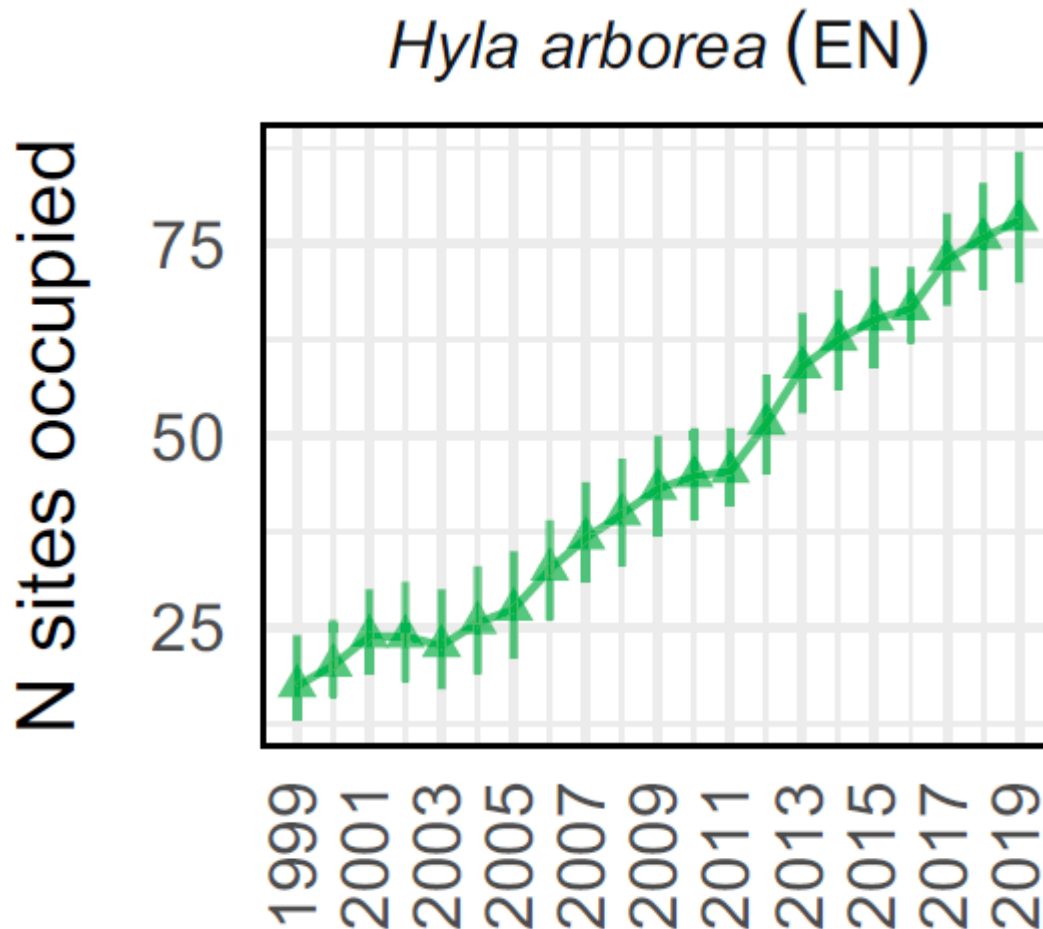
Legend: FV Favourable XX Unknown U1 Unfavourable-Inadequate U2 Unfavourable-Bad

Current selection: 2013-2018, Amphibians, overall assessment.

Species	Regions													
	ALP	ATL	BLS	BOR	CON	MAC	MED	PAN	MATL	STE	MBAL	MMAC	MMED	MBLS
Alytes cisternasii							U1							
Alytes dickhilleni							U2							
Alytes muletensis							U1							
Alytes obstetricans	U1	U2			U2		U1							
Bombina bombina	U1	U2	XX	U1	U1		U1	FV		FV				
Bombina pachypus	U2				U2		U2							
Bombina variegata	U1	U2			U2		U1	U1						
Bufo boulengeri							FV							
Bufo siculus							FV							
Bufo viridis	U1	U2	FV	XX	U1		FV	U1		FV				
Calotriton arnoldi							U1							
Calotriton asper	U1	U2					FV							
Chioglossa lusitanica		U1					U1							
Discoglossus galganoi		FV					XX							
Discoglossus montalentii							FV							
Discoglossus pictus							FV							
Discoglossus sardus							U1							
Epidalea calamita	U2	U2		XX	U2		U2							

Habitats Directive Article 17 Reports

We often understand recovery of species



Moor et al (2022) PNAS 119

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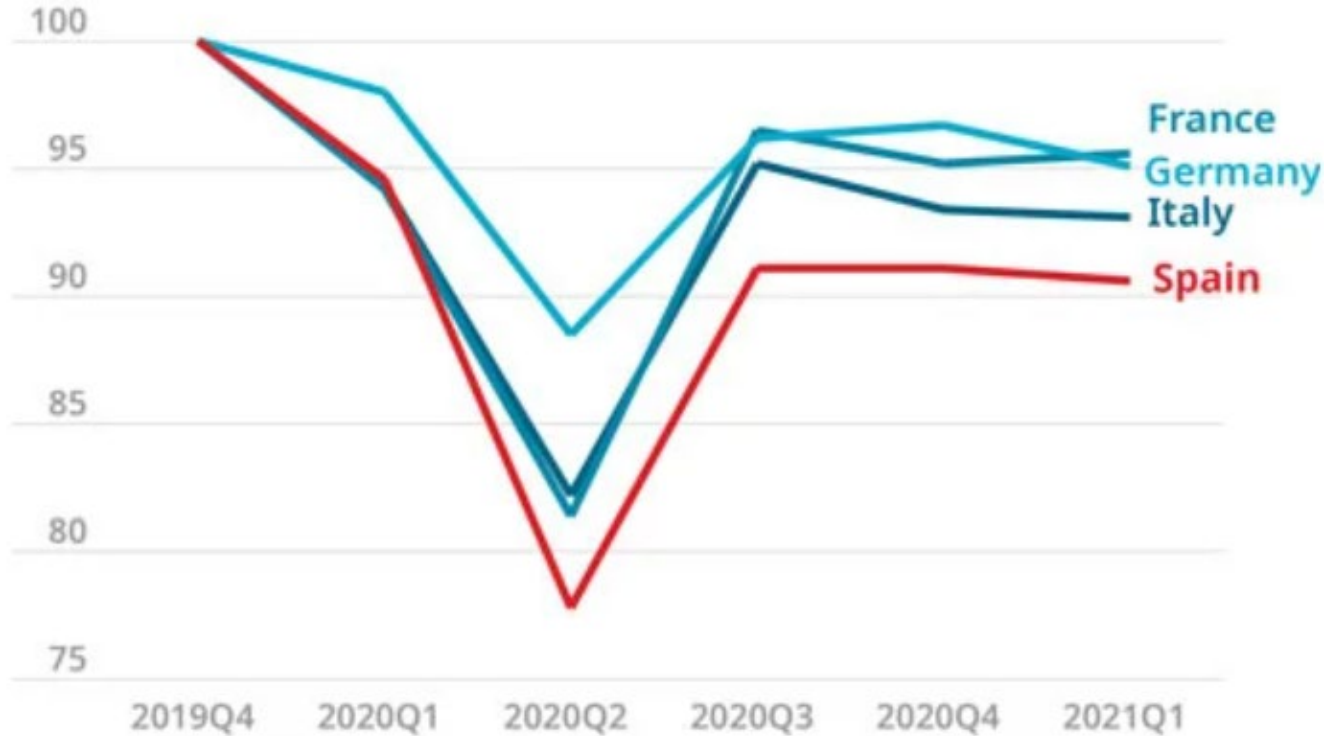


Economic troubles



The pandemic hit the Spanish economy hard

Real GDP, Index: 2019 Q4 = 100



Source: OECD Economic Surveys: Spain 2021



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Economy vs nature?

“In 2018 we built 2.25 homes per 1000 people. Germany managed 3.6, the Netherlands 3.8, France 6.8.

*I tell you why - because time is money, and the **newt-counting delays** in our system are a massive drag on the productivity and the prosperity of this country”*

Boris Johnson, UK Prime Minister, June 2020



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Economy vs nature?

“Investment into nature restoration adds €8 to €38 in economic value for every €1 spent, thanks to the ecosystem services that support food security, ecosystem and climate resilience and mitigation, and human health.”

European Commission press release, June 2022



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Discussion point 1

- Do we need to choose between the recovery of nature and the recovery of the economy?



EU Nature Restoration Law - big changes ahead

- Massive, positive ambition
- New finance mechanisms, assessment frameworks & regulatory regimes likely – e.g. Net Gain, Natural Capital Accounting
- More private investment in nature?



The Nature Restoration
Law passes to restore 20%
of Europe's degraded land
and sea

Discussion point 2

- Should we welcome or resist new regulatory regimes and increased private finance in the recovery of amphibians and reptiles?



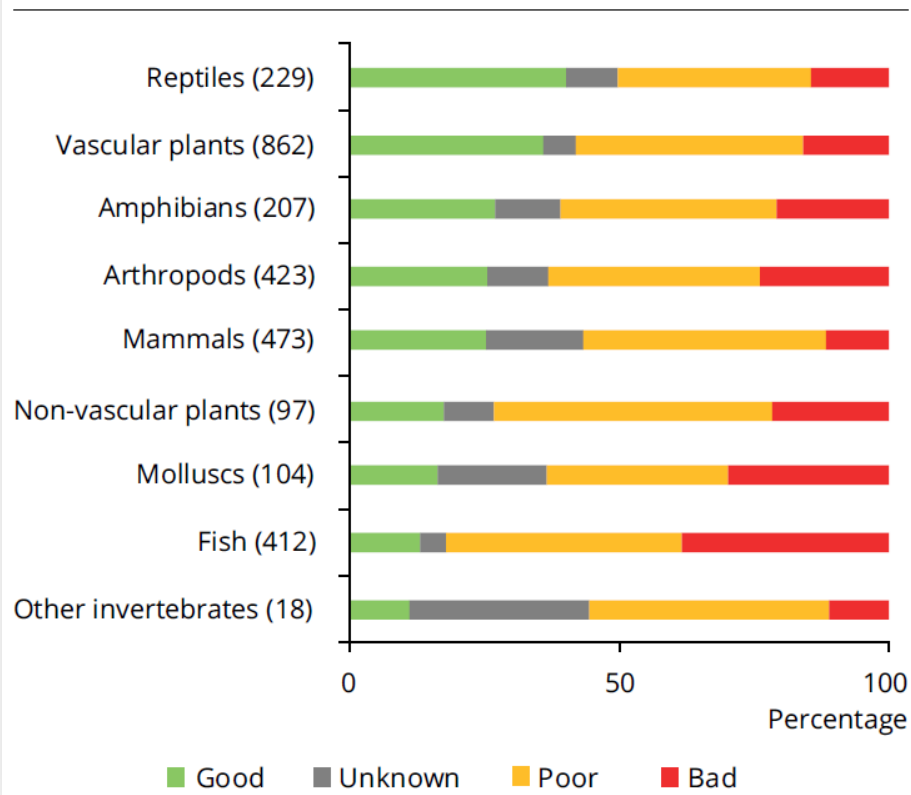
Amphibians and reptiles in trouble?



IUCN

Amphibians and reptiles in trouble?

Figure 3.10 Conservation status per species group at the EU level



State of Nature in the EU, EEA (2020)



Discussion point 3

- Do European amphibians and reptiles need specific consideration in policy, or will they be effectively addressed by generic, cross-taxa measures?



Changing negative dynamics in species regulation: Construction impacts on *Triturus cristatus* in England



Review of the Wider Biodiversity and Ecosystem Benefits of Great Crested Newt Designated and Mitigation Sites, with specific reference to North East Wales

Karen Haysom, Dorothy Driver, and Jim Foster

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust

Report No.344

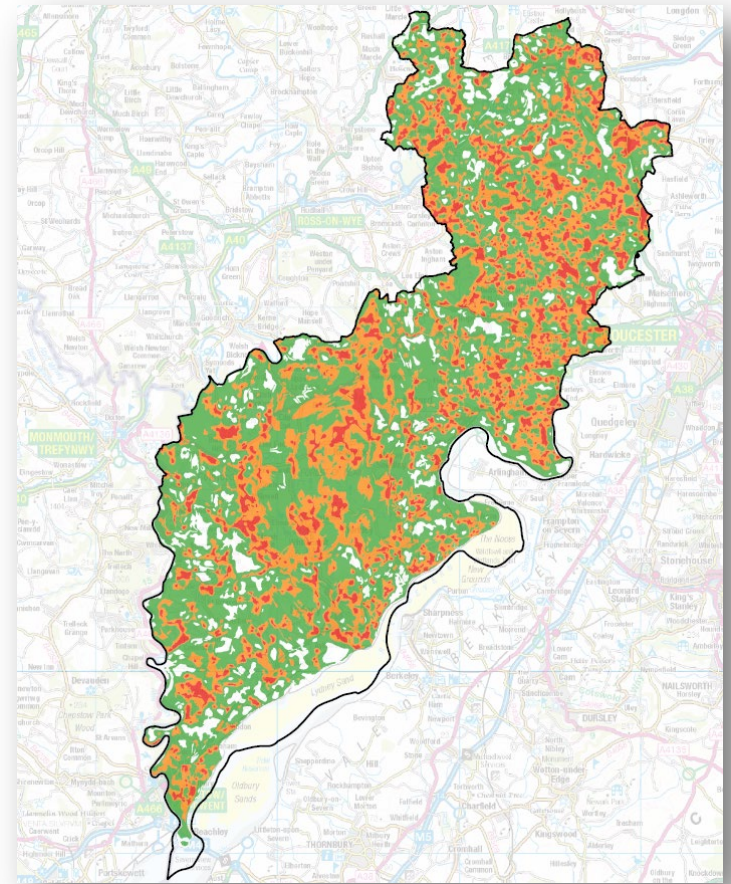


Haysom et al (2021), NRW Report 344



Annual cost estimated £20M-43M (Euro 23M-50M).
Lewis et al (2010), Herp. J., 27, 133–142

- Strategic licensing introduced 2018
- Landscape-level assessment and risk maps
- Habitat creation/restoration funded by developers
- Metric to calculate impact and compensation
- Long term monitoring and habitat management funded
- Set-up funded by private investment



NatureSpace



Key elements

- Long-term outcome: Favourable Conservation Status (Habitats Directive) – gives values for range, population, habitat at landscape scale
- Conservation strategy
- Monitoring



Discussion point 4

- How widely is Favourable Conservation Status used to inform policy and encourage conservation action for European amphibians and reptiles?



Key messages

- 1) Do we need to choose between the recovery of nature and the recovery of the economy?
- 2) Should we welcome or resist new regulatory regimes and increased private finance in the recovery of amphibians and reptiles?
- 3) Do European amphibians and reptiles need specific consideration in policy, or will they be effectively addressed by generic, cross-taxa measures?
- 4) How widely is Favourable Conservation Status used to inform policy and encourage conservation action for European amphibians and reptiles?

Thank you



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