

KARMENU VELLA

Member of the European Commission

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Mr Bengt Gunnar Jonsson
President-elect
Europe Section of the Society for Conservation Biology
Dept. of Natural Sciences
Mid Sweden University
851 70 Sundsvall
SWEDEN

Dear Mr Jonsson,

I am grateful for your letter of 5 November 2015, the content and conclusions of which I have noted with great interest. The future of Europe's biodiversity is an issue of considerable concern to me, as it is for very many of Europe's citizens.

The mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy acknowledges that delivering on our biodiversity commitments by 2020 will be a challenging but necessary task as we cannot afford to lose our natural capital: the basis of human wellbeing and of the economy. That is why we are keen to ensure that the most appropriate tools are available to achieve the objectives of the Biodiversity Strategy, including the legislative measures available through the two Nature Directives.

The current fitness check of the directives is an ex-post evaluation, and it is important to take time to analyse the large amount of evidence that has been gathered about their performance. The Commission is extremely grateful to the large number of organisations and citizens who have contributed their views and thoughts during the evidence gathering process and I am confident that we have gathered as much information as we need for our analysis.

The aim of the fitness check is of course to evaluate whether these directives are achieving their objectives and, if so, whether they are doing so in an efficient manner. Bearing in mind that this evaluation is still underway, it is not possible to make comments as to the future course of action at this stage.

Yours sincerely,



