European Environment Agency
European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity

6120 *Xeric sand calcareous grasslands*

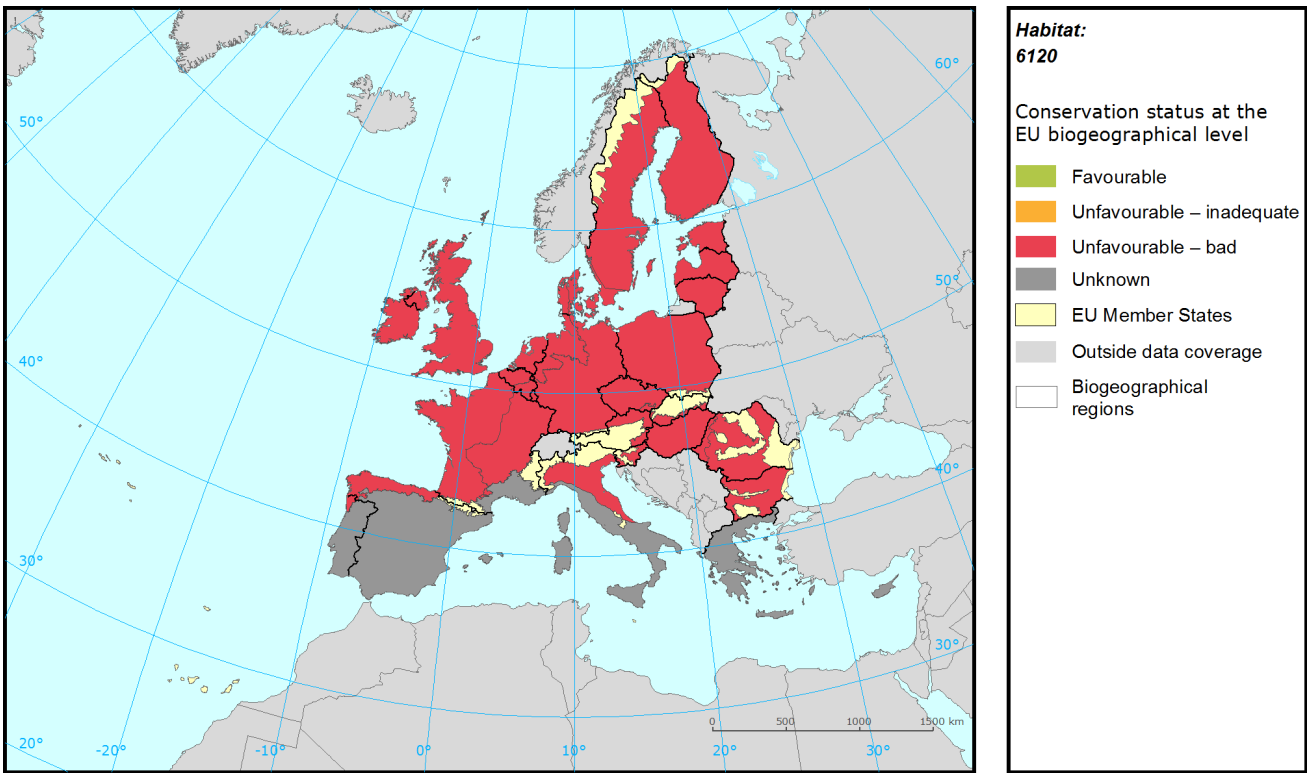
Habitat code	6120
Priority	Yes
Habitat group	Grasslands
Regions	Atlantic, Boreal, Continental, Mediterranean, Pannonian

Xeric sand calcareous grasslands are dry, frequently open grasslands on more or less calciferous sand with a sub-continental centre of distribution. This priority habitat type occurs in association with non coastal dunes.

The conservation status of this habitat is generally unfavourable: it is bad in four of five regions and still unknown in the Mediterranean region (reported by the only country – France). The trend is mostly deteriorating. Besides the above-mentioned countries and Germany in the Continental region (with unfavourable-inadequate status), all other countries concluded unfavourable-bad status. The parameter with the worst status was the future prospects.

The main pressure and threat is mostly species composition change (succession) linked to accumulation of organic material and caused by abandonment or modification of cultivation practices (lack of grazing or mowing). Further factors are fertilisation and nitrogen-input linked to cultivation, also mining and quarrying, direct human disturbance (urbanisation, waste disposal or discharge and recreational activities), modification of hydrographical functioning, forest planting on open ground and even missing or wrongly directed conservation measures.

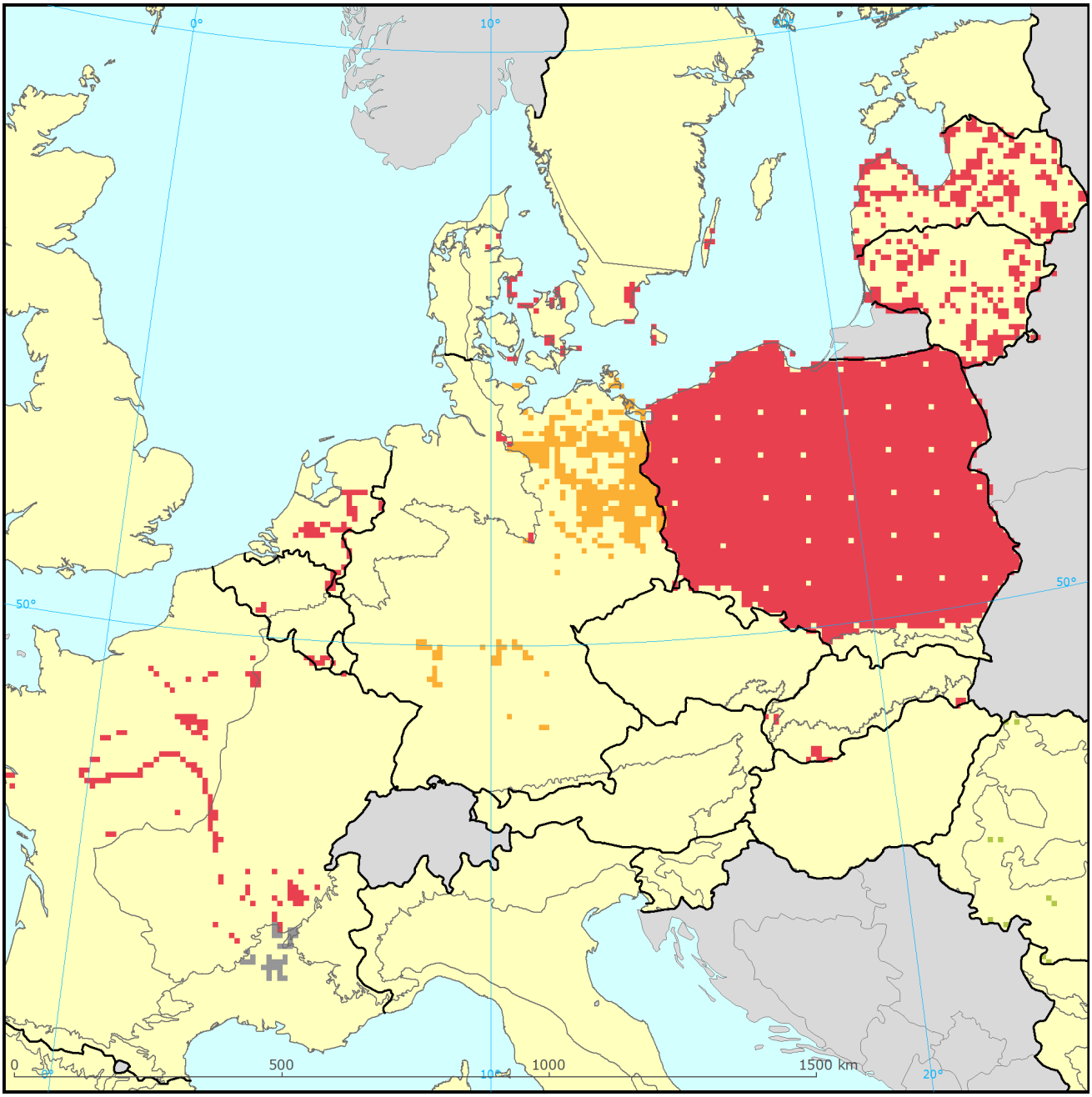
Assessment of conservation status at the European biogeographical level



Region	Conservation status (CS) of parameters				Current CS	Trend in CS	% in region	Previous CS	Reason for change
	Range	Area	Structure & Functions	Future prospects					
ATL	U1	U1	U2	U2	U2	=	3	U2	
BOR	FV	U2	U2	U2	U2	-	10	U2	
CON	U1	U2	U1	U1	U2	-	86	U2	
MED	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	x	0.81	XX	
PAN	U1	U1	U1	U2	U2	-	0.35	U2	

See the endnote for more information[i]

Assessment of conservation status at the Member State level



Habitat: 6120

Distribution and conservation status at the Member State level

- Favourable
- Unfavourable – inadequate
- Unfavourable – bad
- Unknown
- EU Member States
- Outside data coverage
- Biogeographical region

The map shows both Conservation Status and distribution using a 10 km x 10 km grid. Conservation status is assessed at biogeographical level. Therefore the representation in each grid cell is only illustrative.

MS	Region	Conservation status (CS) of parameters				Current CS	Trend in CS	% in region	Previous CS	Reason for change
		Range	Area	Structure & functions	Future prospects					
BE	ATL	FV	U2	U1	U2	U2	+	7.8	U1	Genuine
DE	ATL	U1	U2	U2	U2	U2	-	4.7	U2	Genuine
FR	ATL	U1	U1	U2	U2	U2	=	58.9	U2	
NL	ATL	U2	U2	U1	U2	U2	-	28.7	U2	
LT	BOR	FV	U2	U2	U2	U2	-	43.7	U2-	
LV	BOR	FV	U2	U2	U2	U2	-	55.8	U2	Genuine
SE	BOR	FV	FV	U2	U1	U2	+	0.5	U2	Better data
BE	CON	FV	U2	U2	U2	U2	+	0.2	U2	Genuine
DE	CON	FV	U1	U1	U1	U1	=	10.7	U1	
DK	CON	FV	U2	U1	U2	U2	x	0.9	U2	
FR	CON	U2	U2	U2	U2	U2	-	1.4	U2	
PL	CON	FV	U2	U1	U1	U2	-	86.1	U2	
RO	CON	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV		0.3		
SE	CON	FV	U2	U2	U2	U2	+	0.4	U2-	Better data
FR	MED	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX		100.0	XX	
SK	PAN	U1	U1	U1	U2	U2	-	100.0	U2-	

Knowing that not all changes in conservation status between the reporting periods were genuine, Member States were asked to give the reasons for changes in conservation status. Bulgaria and Romania only joined the EU in 2007 and Greece did not report for 2007-12 so no reason is given for change for these countries. Greek data shown above is from 2001-06.

Main pressures and threats reported by Member States

Member States were asked to report the 20 most important threats and pressures using an agreed hierarchical list which can be found on the Article 17 Reference Portal. Pressures are activities which are currently having an impact on the habitats and threats are activities expected to have an impact in the near future. Pressures and threats were ranked in three classes ‘high, medium and low importance’; the tables below only show threats and pressures classed as ‘high’, for some habitats there were less than ten threats or pressures reported as highly important.

Ten most frequently reported 'highly important' pressures

Code	Activity	Frequency
K02	Vegetation succession/Biocenotic evolution	15
A04	Grazing by livestock	10
A02	Modification of cultivation practices	8
C01	Mining and quarrying	8
G05	Other human intrusions and disturbances	8
J02	Changes in water bodies conditions	8
J03	Other changes to ecosystems	8
A03	Mowing or cutting grasslands	5
A08	Fertilisation in agriculture	5
E03	Discharges (household/industrial)	5

Ten most frequently reported 'highly important' threats

Code	Activity	Frequency
K02	Vegetation succession/Biocenotic evolution	18
A04	Grazing by livestock	9
A02	Modification of cultivation practices	7
H04	Air pollution, air-borne pollutants	7
I01	Invasive alien species	7
A03	Mowing or cutting grasslands	5
B01	Afforestation	5
C01	Mining and quarrying	5
E01	Urbanisation and human habitation	5
G01	Outdoor sports, leisure and recreational activities	5

Proportion of population covered by the Natura 2000 network

Member States were asked to report the area of the habitat which is covered by the Natura 2000 network. The percentage of the habitat area covered by the network was estimated by comparing the area within the network and the total area in the biogeographical/marine region.

Percentage of coverage by Natura 2000 sites in biogeographical/marine region

	ATL	BOR	CON	MED	PAN
BE	47		50		
DE	100		93		
DK			54		
FR	44		60	x	
LT		25			
LV		42			
NL	80				
PL			35		
RO			49		
SE		67	88		
SK					77

See the endnotes for more information[ii]

Most frequently reported conservation measures

Member States were asked to report up to 20 conservation measures being implemented for this habitat using an agreed list which can be found on the Article 17 Reference Portal. Member States were further requested to highlight up to five most important ('highly important') measures; the table below only shows measures classed as 'high', for many habitats there were less than ten measures reported as highly important.

Ten most frequently reported 'highly important' conservation measures

Code	Measure	Frequency
2.1	Maintaining grasslands and other open habitats	41
6.1	Establish protected areas/sites	17
4.2	Restoring/improving the hydrological regime	7
6.0	Other spatial measures	7
6.3	Legal protection of habitats and species	7
6.4	Manage landscape features	7
2.2	Adapting crop production	3
4.0	Other wetland-related measures	3
6.5	Adaptation/ abolition of military land use	3
7.4	Specific single species or species group management measures	3

This information is derived from the Member State national reports submitted to the European Commission under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive in 2013 and covering the period 2007-2012. More detailed information, including the MS reports, is available at: http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/article17/reports2012/habitat/summary/?group=Grasslands&period=3&subject=6120

[i]**Assessment of conservation status at the European biogeographical level:** Current Conservation Status (Current CS) shows the status for the reporting period 2007-2012, Previous Conservation Status (Previous CS) for the reporting period 2000-2006. Reason for change in conservation status between the reporting periods indicates whether the changes in the status were genuine or not genuine. Previous Conservation Status was not assessed for Steppic, Black Sea and Marine Black Sea regions. For these regions the Previous status is therefore considered as 'unknown'. The percentage of the habitat area occurring within the biogeographical/marine region (% in region) is calculated based on the area of GIS distribution.

[ii]**Percentage of coverage by Natura 2000 sites in biogeographical/marine region:** In some cases the population size within the Natura 2000 network has been estimated using a different methodology to the estimate of overall population size and this can lead to percentage covers greater than 100%. In such case the value has been given as 100% and highlighted with an asterisk (*). The value 'x' indicates that the Member State has not reported the habitat area and/or the coverage by Natura 2000. No information is available for Greece. The values are only provided for regions, in which the occurrence of the habitat has been reported by the Member States.