



Elaphe longissima

Annex	IV
Priority	No
Species group	Reptiles
Regions	Alpine, Atlantic, Black Sea, Continental, Mediterranean, Pannonian, Steppic

The Aesculapian snake is widely spread in Europe and it occurs in five geographical regions (valid name is *Zamenis longissimus*, listed in the Habitats Directive as *Elaphe longissima*). This species ranges from northern Spain through most of France, most of Italy, some locations in southeastern and western Germany to Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Hungary and much of Romania, Bulgaria and Greece. It occurs in different habitats from open woodlands to road embankments and old buildings or gardens

Overall it seems that there are better knowledge or data on this species compared to the previous reporting round as there are no Unknown conservation status. Only in two regions (Atlantic and Mediterranean region) the status is Favourable. In the Alpine and Pannonic regions the conservation status is Unfavourable-Bad.

In the Mediterranean region the conservation status was Unknown in 2001-2006 and is now assessed as Favourable. Probably it was the same in the previous reporting round as well based on the nature of changes reported by Spain, France and Italy. Only France report major threats (fire, roads).

Conservation status in the Continental region was Unfavourable-Inadequate in 2001-2006 and is the same in 2007-2012 (qualifier is stable). France, Romania, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic report various threats and pressures of high importance, namely roads and motorways, forestry activities, agricultural intensification, removal of e.g. stone walls or similar, urbanisation, predation, succession and invasive non-native species.

In the Alpine region, the conservation status was in 2001-2006 Unknown and most likely would have been Unfavourable-Bad as now, based on the reported better data and changes in methods. Only Poland, Bulgaria and Romania report pressures or threats of high importance, namely motorised vehicles, forestry, agricultural intensification and urbanisation.

The species in the Pannonian region was assessed as unknown in 2001-2006, however it probably was unfavourable-bad also then as both Hungary and Slovakia hosting the mainly proportion of the species, report having better knowledge in 2007-2012 reporting round. Various major threats and pressures have been reported (however not from Slovakia): roads, abandonment of pastoral systems, species composition change, invasive non-native species, urbanisation and forest planting on open ground.

In the Steppic region the conservation status is Unfavourable-Inadequate (occurs only in Romania). Forestry clearance and urbanisation are reported as major threats and pressures.

In the Black Sea region the species occurs in Bulgaria. The conservation status is

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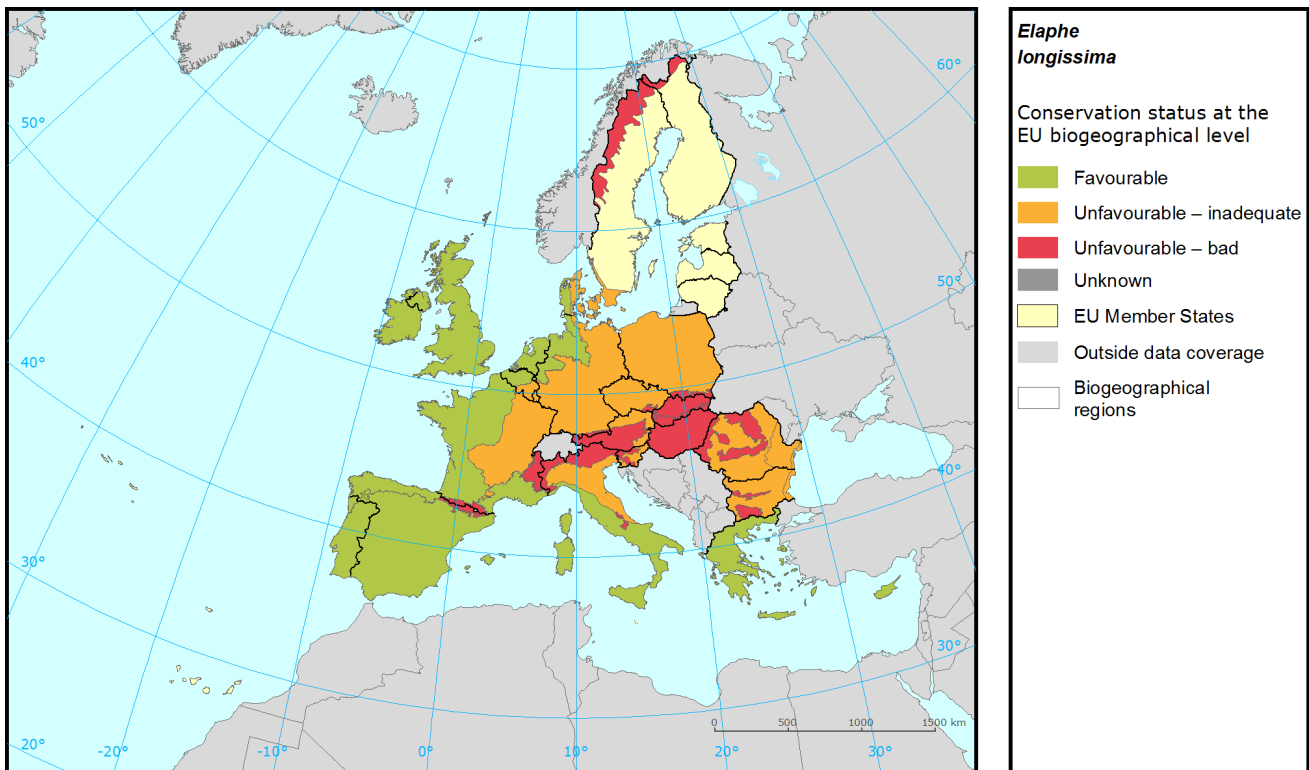
Unfavourable-Inadequate with decreasing trend (most parameters reported as favourable although trends are unknown, except future prospects). Forest clearance, agricultural intensification and urbanisation are reported as high ranked pressures or threats.

IUCN has assessed this species as Least Concern.

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Assessment of conservation status at the European biogeographical level



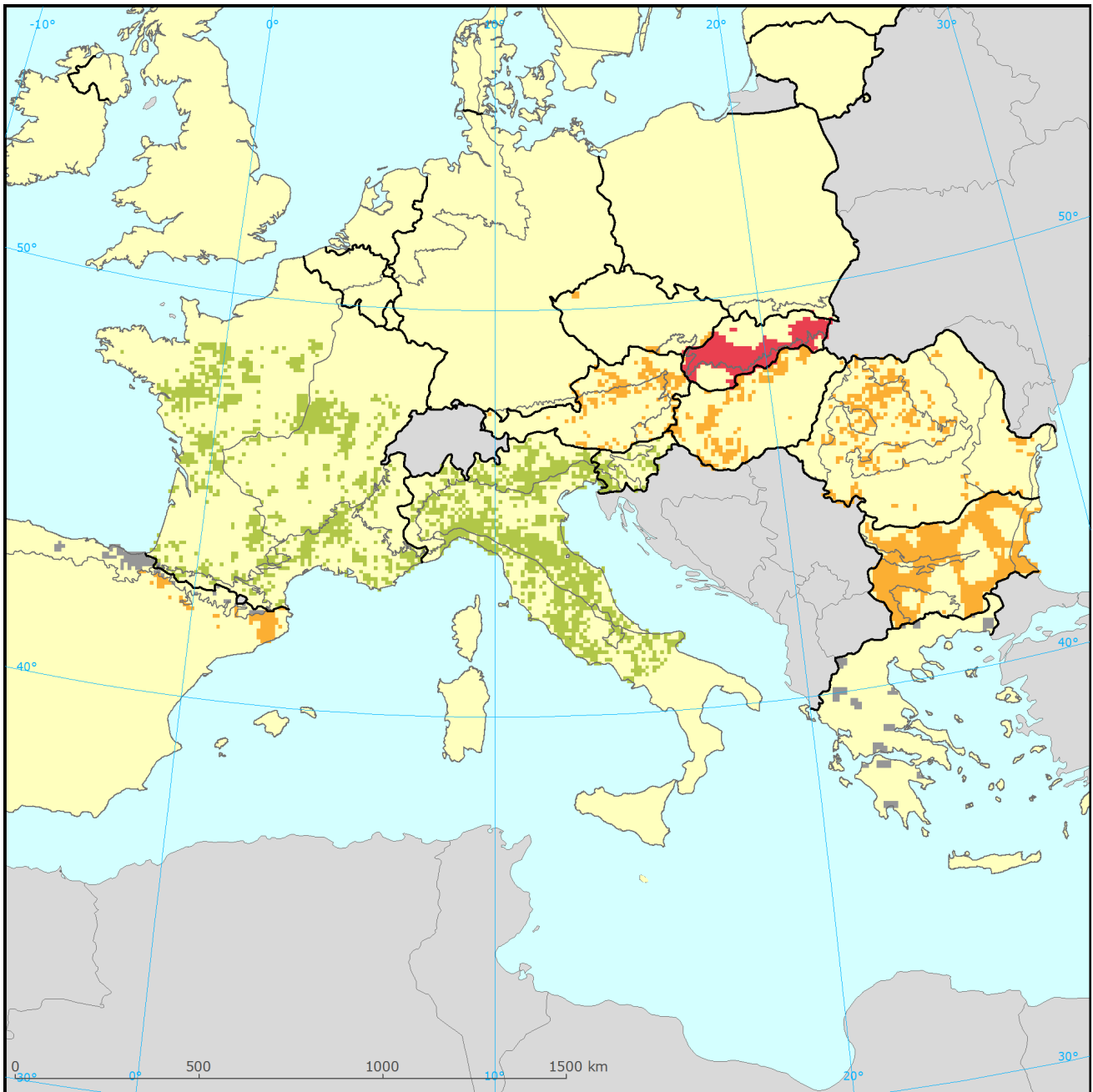
Region	Conservation status (CS) of parameters				Current CS	Trend in CS	% in region	Previous CS	Reason for change
	Range	Population	Habitat	Future prospects					
ALP	U1	U2	U1	U1	U2	=	19	XX	Not genuine
ATL	FV	XX	FV	FV	FV	=	13	U1	Not genuine
BLS	FV	FV	FV	U1	U1	-	1	XX	Not genuine
CON	U1	U1	U1	U1	U1	=	42	U1	
MED	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV	=	16	XX	Not genuine
PAN	U1	U2	U1	U1	U2	x	8	XX	Not genuine
STE	U1	U1	U1	U1	U1	x	0.55	XX	Not genuine

See the endnote for more informationⁱ

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Assessment of conservation status at the Member State level



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Distribution and conservation status at the Member State level

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

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.

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MS	Region	Conservation status of parameters				Current CS	Trend in CS	% in region	Previous CS	Reason for change
		Range	Population	Habitat	Future prospects					
AT	ALP	FV	U1	FV	FV	U1	x	10.4	U1	
BG	ALP	FV	FV	U1	U1	U1	-	11.0		
DE	ALP	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX		0.1	U1	
ES	ALP	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX		2.3	XX	
FR	ALP	FV	XX	FV	FV	FV		5.2	U1	Changed method
IT	ALP	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV		27.2	FV	
PL	ALP	U1	U2	U1	XX	U2	+	2.3	U2	Genuine
RO	ALP	FV	U1	U1	U1	U1		11.3		
SI	ALP	FV	XX	FV	FV	FV		2.9	U1	Better data
SK	ALP	U1	U2	U1	U1	U2	=	27.2	U1	Better data
ES	ATL	XX	XX	FV	XX	XX		10.9	XX	
FR	ATL	FV	XX	FV	FV	FV		89.1	U1	Changed method
BG	BLS	FV	FV	U1	U1	U1	-	100.0		
AT	CON	FV	U1	FV	FV	U1	x	5.0	U1	
BG	CON	FV	FV	U1	U1	U1	-	32.2		
CZ	CON	FV	U1	U1	U1	U1	-	1.0	U2	Genuine
DE	CON	FV	U1	FV	U1	U1	=	0.7	U2	Genuine
FR	CON	FV	XX	FV	FV	FV		16.9	U1	Changed method
IT	CON	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV		29.1	FV	
RO	CON	FV	U1	U1	U1	U1		12.3		
SI	CON	FV	XX	FV	FV	FV		2.8	U1	Better data
ES	MED	XX	XX	U1	XX	U1	x	12.3	XX	Changed method
FR	MED	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV		31.9	U1	Changed method
GR	MED	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX		4.5	XX	
IT	MED	FV	FV	FV	FV	FV		51.3	XX	Better data
CZ	PAN	FV	U1	U1	U1	U1	=	0.3	U1	
HU	PAN	U1	XX	U1	U1	U1	x	64.1	XX	Better data
RO	PAN	U1	U1	U1	U1	U1		3.4		
SK	PAN	U1	U2	U1	U1	U2	=	32.1	U1	Better data
RO	STE	U1	U1	U1	U1	U1		100.0		

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 species 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 species there were less than ten threats or pressures reported as highly important.

Ten most frequently reported 'highly important' pressures

Code	Activity	Frequency
B02	Forest and plantation management & use	22
E01	Urbanisation and human habitation	16
D01	Roads, railroads and paths	14
A02	Modification of cultivation practices	8
K02	Vegetation succession/Biocenotic evolution	8
A10	Restructuring agricultural parcels	5
I01	Invasive alien species	5
A03	Mowing or cutting grasslands	3
A04	Grazing by livestock	3
B01	Afforestation	3

Ten most frequently reported 'highly important' threats

Code	Activity	Frequency
B02	Forest and plantation management & use	24
D01	Roads, railroads and paths	15
E01	Urbanisation and human habitation	15
K02	Vegetation succession/Biocenotic evolution	12
A10	Restructuring agricultural parcels	9
I01	Invasive alien species	6
A03	Mowing or cutting grasslands	3
B01	Afforestation	3
G01	Outdoor sports, leisure and recreational activities	3
J01	Fire and fire suppression	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/species/summary/?group=Reptiles&period=3&subject=Elaphe+longissima>

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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 species population occurring within the biogeographical/marine region (% in region) is calculated based on the area of GIS distribution.