



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate D - Natural Capital
ENV.D.3 - Nature Protection

Brussels, 3 février 2017
ENV D.3/NN/LS/ug Ares (2017)

Dear Petitioners,

President Juncker has asked me to reply to your letter of 5 December 2016 concerning the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

The Commission's conclusions of the Fitness Check evaluation¹ have confirmed that the Birds and Habitats Directives are fit for purpose. They remain the cornerstone of Europe's biodiversity policy and provide essential benefits not only to nature, but also to people and the economy, its added value having been well-recognised in the evaluation. Based on the findings of the Fitness Check, the Commission has decided to develop an Action Plan to improve the implementation of the Directives and to address the identified shortcomings, including those deriving from inefficient implementation approaches. Smarter implementation of the rules is necessary to meet EU conservation objectives, maintain Europe's high environmental standards and offer further value to the people and to the economy.

The Commission's preparatory work for the Action Plan is ongoing and it is expected to be finalised in 2017.

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Notaro
Head of Unit

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/index_en.htm