Report under the Article 17 of the Habitats Directive
Period 2007-2012

**European Environment
Agency**
*European Topic Centre
on Biological Diversity*

# 6240 *Sub-continental steppic grasslands*

**Habitat code**     6240
**Priority**            Yes
**Habitat group**    Grasslands
**Regions**          Alpine, Atlantic, Black Sea, Continental, Pannonian

Steppe like grasslands dominated by tussocky feather grasses such as *Stipa capillata* and *Stipa joannis* typical of central Europe where it is most widespread in the Pannonic region which has most of the total habitat area but also occurs locally in other regions such as in the French Alps where the microclimate of the Durance valley gives similar conditions. They are partly of natural and partly of anthropogenic origin.
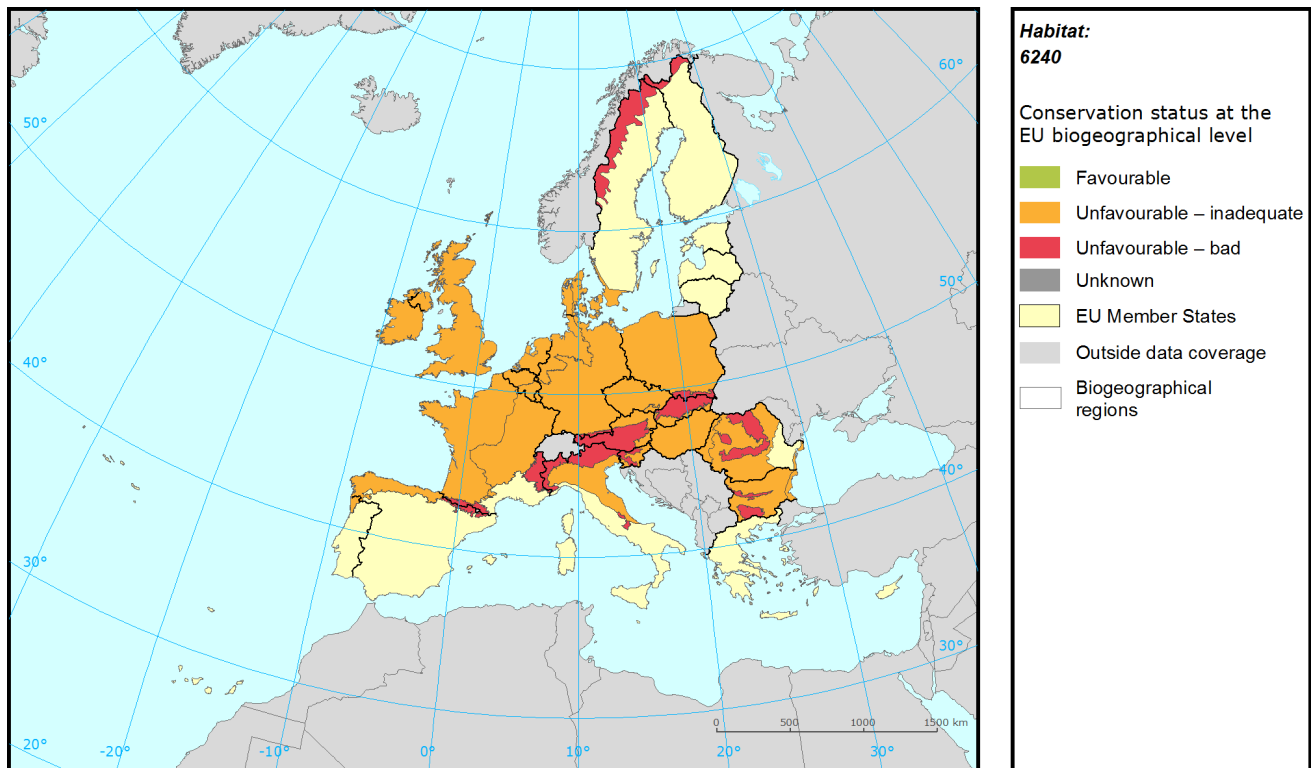
The conservation status of this habitat is generally unfavourable: bad and deteriorating in the Alpine region (due to Italy) and inadequate in all other four regions (Atlantic – only Germany reporting, Black Sea – only Bulgaria reporting, Continental and Pannonian – due to the majority of countries). No country reported this habitat as favourable , but there was a genuine improvement  in the Atlantic region (Germany). The area reported by Romania is likely to be an overestimate when compared to the spatial data.

Major pressures and threats are mostly lack of grazing (and sometimes of mowing) leading to succession and accumulation of organic material, or on the contrary intensive grazing. The habitat can suffer from invasive non-native species, sport and recreational activities and air pollution. Factors of lesser intensity are development of infrastructure, waste dumps and fertilisation.

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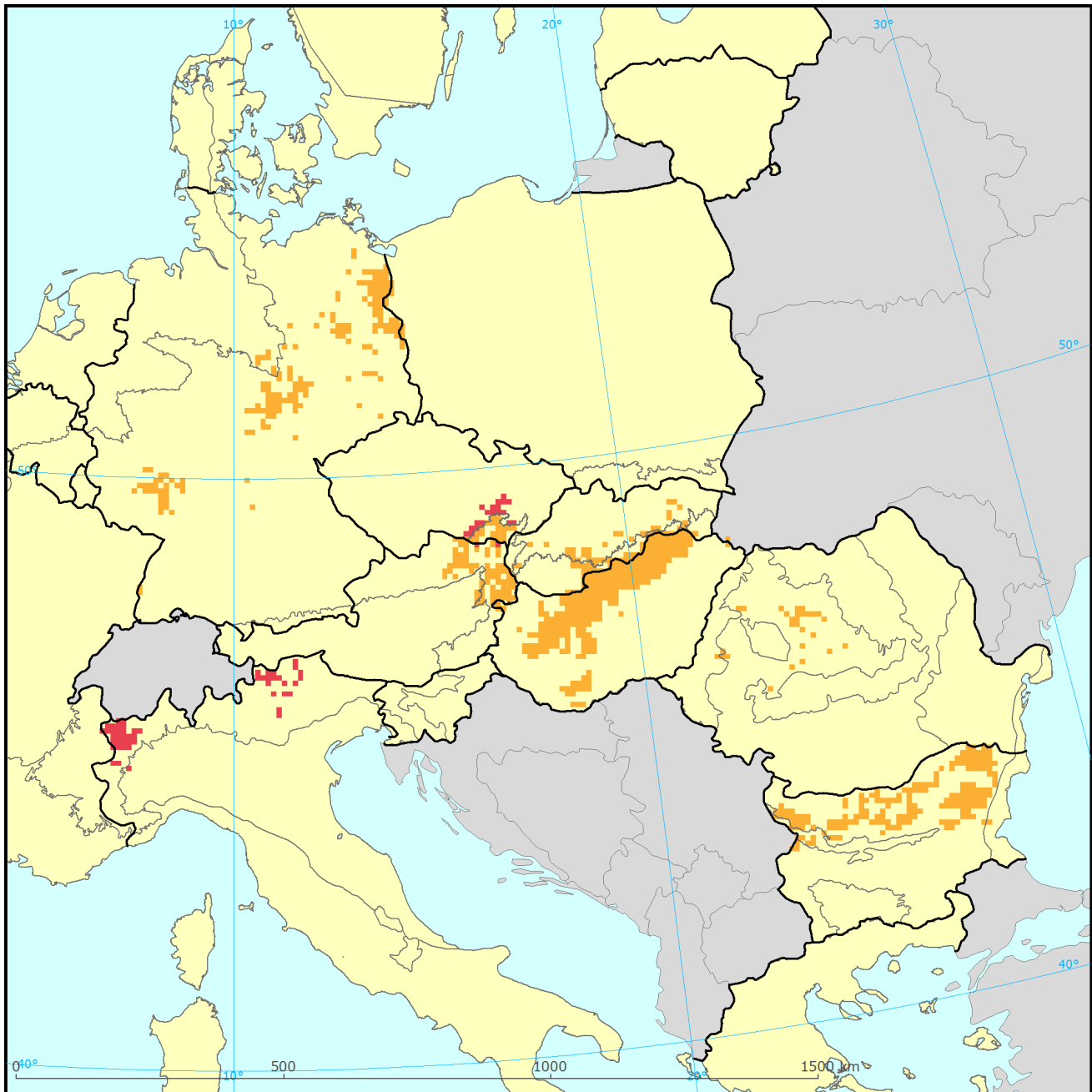## Assessment of conservation status at the European biogeographical level



| Region | Conservation status (CS) of parameters | | | | Current CS | Trend in CS | % in region | Previous CS | Reason for change |
|--------|-------|------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| | Range | Area | Structure & Functions | Future prospects | | | | | |
| ALP | U2 | U2 | U2 | U2 | U2 | - | 10 | U1 | Not genuine |
| ATL | FV | U1 | FV | FV | U1 | + | 0.8 | U2 | Not genuine |
| BLS | FV | FV | U1 | U1 | U1 | = | 0.11 | XX | Not genuine |
| CON | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | - | 54 | U1 | |
| PAN | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | = | 35 | U2 | Not genuine |

See the endnote for more information[i]

# Habitat: 6240 *Sub-Pannonic steppic grasslands*

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## Assessment of conservation status at the Member State level



**Habitat: 6240**

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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### Report under the Article 17 of the Habitats Directive

| 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 | | | | | |
| AT | ALP | U1 | U1 | FV | U1 | U1 | = | 4.4 | U2 | Changed method |
| BG | ALP | FV | FV | U1 | U1 | U1 | = | 7.7 | | |
| IT | ALP | U2 | U2 | U2 | U2 | U2 | - | 54.9 | U1 | Changed method |
| SK | ALP | XX | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | - | 33.0 | U1 | Better data |
| DE | ATL | FV | U1 | FV | FV | U1 | + | 100.0 | U1 | Genuine |
| BG | BLS | FV | FV | U1 | U1 | U1 | = | 100.0 | | |
| AT | CON | U1 | U1 | FV | U1 | U1 | x | 14.6 | U1 | |
| BG | CON | FV | FV | U1 | U1 | U1 | = | 37.9 | | |
| CZ | CON | FV | FV | U2 | U1 | U2 | - | 4.5 | U2 | Changed method |
| DE | CON | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | - | 37.0 | U1 | Genuine |
| RO | CON | FV | FV | FV | U1 | U1 | | 6.0 | | |
| CZ | PAN | FV | FV | U1 | U1 | U1 | - | 6.6 | U2 | Better data |
| HU | PAN | FV | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | = | 87.8 | U2 | Changed method |
| SK | PAN | XX | U1 | U1 | U1 | U1 | - | 5.6 | U1 | Better data |

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 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A04 | Grazing by livestock | 42 |
| K02 | Vegetation succession/Biocenotic evolution | 32 |
| A03 | Mowing or cutting grasslands | 11 |
| G01 | Outdoor sports, leisure and recreational activities | 11 |
| I01 | Invasive alien species | 5 |

**Ten most frequently reported 'highly important' threats**

| Code | Activity | Frequency |
|------|----------|----------:|
| A04 | Grazing by livestock | 38 |
| K02 | Vegetation succession/Biocenotic evolution | 33 |
| I01 | Invasive alien species | 10 |
| A03 | Mowing or cutting grasslands | 5 |
| G01 | Outdoor sports, leisure and recreational activities | 5 |
| H04 | Air pollution, air-borne pollutants | 5 |
| I02 | Problematic native species | 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**

| | ALP | ATL | BLS | CON | PAN |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| **AT** | 100 | | | 78 | |
| **BG** | 92 | | 100 | 96 | |
| **CZ** | | | | 62 | 66 |
| **DE** | | x | | 98 | |
| **HU** | | | | | 85 |
| **IT** | 40 | | | | |
| **RO** | | | | 56 | |
| **SK** | 59 | | | | 53 |

See the endnotes for more information[ii]

# Habitat: 6240 *Sub-Pannonic steppic grasslands*

## 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 | 32 |
| 6.1 | Establish protected areas/sites | 24 |
| 6.0 | Other spatial measures | 11 |
| 2.2 | Adapting crop production | 8 |
| 6.4 | Manage landscape features | 8 |
| 9.1 | Regulating/Management exploitation of natural resources on land | 8 |
| 2.0 | Other agriculture-related measures | 3 |
| 6.2 | Establishing wilderness areas/ allowing succession | 3 |
| 6.3 | Legal protection of habitats and species | 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=6240

[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.