

**European Community Directive  
on the Conservation of Natural Habitats  
and of Wild Fauna and Flora  
(92/43/EEC)**

Third Report by the United Kingdom under  
Article 17

on the implementation of the Directive  
from January 2007 to December 2012  
Conservation status assessment for

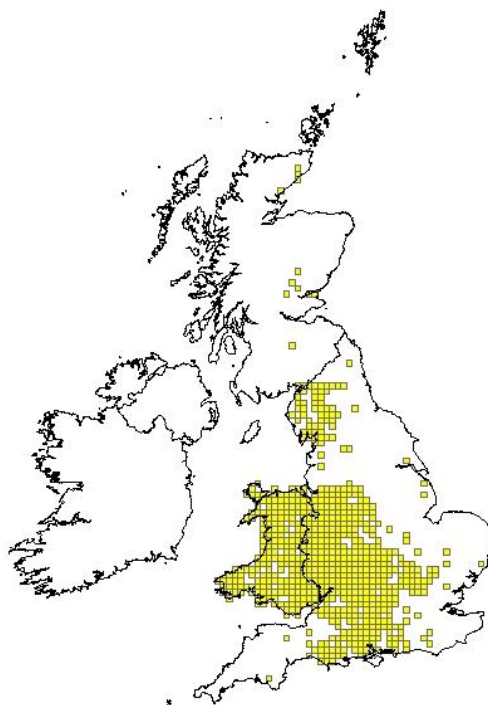
Species:

S1358 - Polecat (*Mustela putorius*)

## Reporting format on the 'main results of the surveillance under Article 11' for Annex II, IV & V species

<i>Field name</i>	<i>Brief explanations</i>	
<b>0.2 Species</b>	<b>0.2.1 Species code</b>	<b>S1358</b>
	<b>0.2.2 Species scientific name</b>	<b><i>Mustela putorius</i></b>
	<b>0.2.3 Alternative species scientific name</b> Optional	
	<b>0.2.4 Common name</b> Optional	

<b>1.1 Maps</b>			
<b>1.1.1 Distribution map</b>	<b>True</b>	<b>Sensitive</b>	<b>False</b>
	The distribution map is based on species records which are considered to be representative of the range within the current reporting period. For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document.		



<b>1.1.2 Method used - map</b>	<b>Estimate based on partial data with some extrapolation and/or modelling</b>		
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.		
<b>1.1.3 Year or period</b>	<b>1997-2012</b>		
	The distribution map is based on species records which are considered to be representative of the range within the current reporting period. For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document.		

<b>1.1.4 Additional distribution map</b> Optional	<b>False</b>
<b>1.1.5 Range map</b>	<b>True</b> The range map was produced by applying the UK range mapping tool to the distribution map presented in 1.1.4. The alpha value for this species was 45km. For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document.



<b>2.1 Biogeographical region &amp; marine regions</b>	<b>ATL</b>
<b>2.2 Published sources</b>	<p><b>BATTERSBY, J (ed.) &amp; TRACKING MAMMALS PARTNERSHIP. 2005. UK Mammals: Species Status and Population Trends. Joint Nature Conservation Committee/Tracking Mammals Partnership <a href="http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-3311">http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-3311</a>.</b></p> <p><b>BIRKS, J.D.S. and KITCHENER, A.C. 1999. The Distribution and Status of the Polecat <i>Mustela putorius</i> in Britain in the 1990s. Vincent Wildlife Trust, London.</b></p> <p><b>BIRKS, J.D.S. And KITCHENER, A.C. 2008. Polecat <i>Mustela putorius</i>. Pp476-487 in HARRIS, S. &amp; YALDEN, D.W. Mammals of the British Isles: Handbook, 4th Edition. The Mammal Society, Southampton. 799pp.</b></p> <p><b>BIRKS, JDS 2008. The polecat survey of Britain 2004-2006. Vincent Wildlife Trust, Ledbury</b></p> <p><b>BIRKS, J.D.S. and KITCHENER, A.C. 1999. The Distribution and Status of the Polecat <i>Mustela putorius</i> in Britain in the 1990s. Vincent Wildlife Trust, London.</b></p> <p><b>CRAIK, J.C.A. &amp; BROWN, D. 1997. Polecats in the west of Scotland. Glasgow Naturalist 23(2): 50-53.</b></p> <p><b>HARRIS, S., MORRIS, P., WRAY, S. AND YALDEN, D. 1995. A Review of British Mammals: population estimates and conservation status of British mammals other than cetaceans.</b></p>

Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough  
<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-2759>  
**MACDONALD, D.W. AND TATTERSALL, F.T. 2001 Britain's Mammals: The Challenge for Conservation.** Mammals Trust UK/WildCru.  
**SOLOW, A.R., KITCHENER, A.C., ROBERTS, D.L. & BIRKS, J.D.S. 2006. Rediscovery of the Scottish polecat, *Mustela putorius*: survival or reintroduction?** *Biological Conservation* 128: 574-575  
[www.drdaavidroberts.com/docs/Solow\\_etal\\_2006\\_polecat.pdf](http://www.drdaavidroberts.com/docs/Solow_etal_2006_polecat.pdf).

#### UK distribution map data sources

##### Mammals Database

**NBN Gateway Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre GA000479 Extracted 21/08/2012 Bedfordshire Mammals (BNHS) - 1987-2010**  
**NBN Gateway Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre GA001100 Extracted 21/08/2012 BRERC JNCC May 2012**  
**NBN Gateway Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre GA000871 Extracted 21/08/2012 Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre. Vertebrate Observation Records, other than Birds. Pre-2010 for Cumbria**  
**NBN Gateway Dorset Environmental Records Centre GA001010 Extracted 21/08/2012 Dorset Important Species 2012 for Natural England use only**  
**NBN Gateway Environmental Records Information Centre North East GA000504 Extracted 21/08/2012 ERIC North East non-sensitive species records**  
**NBN Gateway Fife Nature Records Centre GA000387 Extracted 21/08/2012 Records for Fife Nature Records Centre**  
**NBN Gateway Herefordshire Biological Records Centre GA001084 Extracted 21/08/2012 Herefordshire Biological Records Centre Species Records**  
**NBN Gateway Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre GA000694 Extracted 21/08/2012 Leicestershire Mammal Records to end of 2009**  
**NBN Gateway Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership GA000625 Extracted 21/08/2012 Lincolnshire Mammals (excluding bats)**  
**NBN Gateway People's Trust for Endangered Species GA001099 Extracted 21/08/2012 *Living with Mammals* survey: sightings from 2003 to 2011**  
**NBN Gateway Scottish Natural Heritage GA001147 Extracted 21/08/2012 Compilation of records of 12 Article 17 terrestrial mammal species in Scotland**  
**NBN Gateway Shropshire Ecological Data Network GA000693 Extracted 21/08/2012 Shropshire Ecological Data Network Database**  
**NBN Gateway Staffordshire Ecological Record GA000549 Extracted 21/08/2012 SER Species-based Surveys**  
**NBN Gateway Suffolk Biological Records Centre GA000623 Extracted 21/08/2012 Suffolk Biological Records Centre (SBRC) dataset**  
**NBN Gateway Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre GA001031 Extracted 21/08/2012 Surrey Mammals Records (General)**

	<p><b>NBN Gateway Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre GA001076 Extracted 21/08/2012 SxBRC Full dataset for Environment Agency and Natural England use only.</b></p> <p><b>NBN Gateway Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre GA000630 Extracted 21/08/2012 Wiltshire &amp; Swindon Incidental Species Records</b></p> <p><b>NBN Gateway Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre GA001098 Extracted 21/08/2012 Wiltshire and Swindon Habitats Directive (Article 17) Species - Reporting Group Use Only</b></p> <p><b>NBN Gateway Worcestershire Biological Records Centre GA000712 Extracted 21/08/2012 WBRC Species data for Worcestershire collated by date.</b></p> <p><b>Polecat data (1992-1997)</b></p> <p><b>Polecat data 1990-2006</b></p> <p><b>The Vincent Wildlife Trust 2004-6 polecat/ferret survey sent to JNCC (LH) by Lizzie Croose 11/07/2012</b></p> <p><b>The Vincent Wildlife Trust, Scottish polecat and ferret records 2004-2006 emailed to JNCC (LH) by Lizzie Croose 11/07/2012</b></p> <p><b>The Vincent Wildlife Trust. Polecat records 2006-2012 for JNCC.xls emailed to JNCC (LH) by Lizzie Croose 11/07/2012</b></p> <p><b>Wales LRC Priority &amp; Protected Species layer OR VWT adhoc records OR VWT National Polecat survey. Emailed to JNCC (LH) by Liz Halliwell 08/08/2012</b></p> <p>UK Distribution Map data sources</p> <p>Mammals Database</p> <p>NBN Gateway Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre GA000479 Extracted 21/08/2012 Bedfordshire Mammals (BNHS) - 1987-2010</p> <p>NBN Gateway Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre GA001100 Extracted 21/08/2012 BRERC JNCC May 2012</p> <p>NBN Gateway Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre GA000871 Extracted 21/08/2012 Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre. Vertebrate Observation Records, other than Birds. Pre-2010 for Cumbria</p> <p>NBN Gateway Dorset Environmental Records Centre GA001010 Extracted 21/08/2012 Dorset Important Species 2012 for Natural England use only</p> <p>NBN Gateway Environmental Records Information Centre North East GA000504 Extracted 21/08/2012 ERIC North East non-sensitive species records</p> <p>NBN Gateway Fife Nature Records Centre GA000387 Extracted 21/08/2012 Records for Fife Nature Records Centre</p> <p>NBN Gateway Herefordshire Biological Records Centre GA001084 Extracted 21/08/2012 Herefordshire Biological Records Centre Species Records</p> <p>NBN Gateway Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre GA000694 Extracted 21/08/2012 Leicestershire Mammal Records to end of 2009</p> <p>NBN Gateway Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership GA000625 Extracted 21/08/2012 Lincolnshire Mammals (excluding bats)</p> <p>NBN Gateway People's Trust for Endangered Species GA001099 Extracted 21/08/2012 <i>Living with Mammals</i> survey: sightings from 2003</p>
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	<p>to 2011</p> <p>NBN Gateway Scottish Natural Heritage GA001147 Extracted 21/08/2012 Compilation of records of 12 Article 17 terrestrial mammal species in Scotland</p> <p>NBN Gateway Shropshire Ecological Data Network GA000693 Extracted 21/08/2012 Shropshire Ecological Data Network Database</p> <p>NBN Gateway Staffordshire Ecological Record GA000549 Extracted 21/08/2012 SER Species-based Surveys</p> <p>NBN Gateway Suffolk Biological Records Centre GA000623 Extracted 21/08/2012 Suffolk Biological Records Centre (SBRC) dataset</p> <p>NBN Gateway Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre GA001031 Extracted 21/08/2012 Surrey Mammals Records (General)</p> <p>NBN Gateway Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre GA001076 Extracted 21/08/2012 SxBRC Full dataset for Environment Agency and Natural England use only.</p> <p>NBN Gateway Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre GA000630 Extracted 21/08/2012 Wiltshire &amp; Swindon Incidental Species Records</p> <p>NBN Gateway Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre GA001098 Extracted 21/08/2012 Wiltshire and Swindon Habitats Directive (Article 17) Species - Reporting Group Use Only</p> <p>NBN Gateway Worcestershire Biological Records Centre GA000712 Extracted 21/08/2012 WBRC Species data for Worcestershire collated by date.</p> <p>Polecat data (1992-1997)</p> <p>Polecat data 1990-2006</p> <p>The Vincent Wildlife Trust 2004-6 polecat/ferret survey sent to JNCC (LH) by Lizzie Croose 11/07/2012</p> <p>The Vincent Wildlife Trust, Scottish polecat and ferret records 2004-2006 emailed to JNCC (LH) by Lizzie Croose 11/07/2012</p> <p>The Vincent Wildlife Trust.Polecat records 2006-2012 for JNCC.xls emailed to JNCC (LH) by Lizzie Croose 11/07/2012</p> <p>Wales LRC Priority &amp; Protected Species layer OR VWT adhoc records OR VWT National Polecat survey. Emailed to JNCC (LH) by Liz Halliwell 08/08/2012</p>
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<b>2.3 Range</b>	
<b>2.3.1 Surface area Range</b>	<p><b>118718.82</b></p> <p>The surface area of the range was calculated from the map presented in 1.1.5. For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document.</p>
<b>2.3.2 Method used Surface area of Range</b>	<p><b>Estimate based on partial data with some extrapolation and/or modelling</b></p> <p>For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.</p>
<b>2.3.3 Short-term trend Period</b>	<p><b>1997-2012</b></p> <p>For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.</p>
<b>2.3.4 Short term trend</b>	<b>stable</b>

<b>Trend direction</b>	The short term trend direction was derived by comparing the range map in 1.1.5 with the range map produced in the 2007 report, by considering the range trend in the 2007 report, and by considering any further information provided by the UK country conservation agencies. For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.3.5 Short-term trend Magnitude</b> Optional	<b>a) Minimum</b>	
	<b>b) Maximum</b>	
<b>2.3.6 Long-term trend Period</b> Optional	<b>1988-2012</b> For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.3.7 Long-term trend Trend direction</b> Optional	<b>increase</b> The long term trend direction was derived by comparing the range map in 1.1.5 with the range map produced in the 2007 report, by considering the range trend in the 2007 report, and by considering any further information provided by the UK country conservation agencies. For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.3.8 Long-term trend Magnitude</b> Optional	<b>a) Minimum</b>	
	<b>b) Maximum</b>	
<b>2.3.9 Favourable reference range</b>	<b>a) Value in km<sup>2</sup></b>	
	<b>b) Operator for FRR</b>	<b>approximately equal to</b>
	<b>c) FRR is unknown (indicated by "true")</b>	<b>False</b>
	<b>d) Method used to set FRR</b>	
<b>2.3.10 Reason for change</b> Is the difference between the	<b>a) Genuine change?</b>	<b>False</b>

reported value in 2.3.1 and the previous reporting round mainly due to...	There is negligible difference between the current range and the range reported in 2007. The slight decrease is likely to be due to different data.	
	<b>b) Improved knowledge/more accurate data?</b>	<b>True</b>
	There is negligible difference between the current range and the range reported in 2007. The slight decrease is likely to be due to different data.	
	<b>c) Use of different method (e.g. "Range tool")?</b>	<b>False</b>
There is negligible difference between the current range and the range reported in 2007. The slight decrease is likely to be due to different data.		

<b>2.4 Population</b>		
<b>2.4.1 Population size estimation</b> (using individuals or agreed exceptions where possible)	<b>a) Unit</b>	<b>number of individuals</b>
	The population unit is the same as reported in 2007.	
	<b>b) Minimum</b>	<b>46784</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
	<b>c) Maximum</b>	<b>46784</b>
For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.		
<b>2.4.2 Population size estimation</b> (using population unit other than individuals) Optional ( <i>if 2.4.1 filled in</i> )	<b>a) Unit</b>	
	<b>b) Minimum</b>	
<b>2.4.3 Additional information on population estimates / conversion</b> Optional	<b>a) Definition of "locality"</b>	
	<b>b) Method to convert data</b>	
<b>2.4.4 Year or period</b>	<b>2004-2006</b>	
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.4.5 Method used</b>	<b>Estimate based on partial data with some extrapolation and/or</b>	



<b>Population size</b>	<b>modelling</b>	
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.4.6 Short-term trend Period</b>	<b>1997-2006</b>	
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.4.7 Short-term trend Trend direction</b>	<b>increase</b>	
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.4.8 Short-term trend Magnitude</b> Optional	<b>a) Minimum</b>	
	<b>b) Maximum</b>	
	<b>c) Confidence interval</b>	
<b>2.4.9 Short-term trend Method used</b>	<b>Estimate based on partial data with some extrapolation and/or modelling</b>	
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.4.10 Long-term trend – Period</b> Optional		
<b>2.4.11 Long-term trend Trend direction</b> Optional		
<b>2.4.12 Long-term trend Magnitude</b> Optional	<b>a) Minimum</b>	
	<b>b) Maximum</b>	
	<b>c) Confidence interval</b>	
<b>2.4.13 Long term trend</b>		

Method used	Optional	
<b>2.4.14 Favourable reference population</b>	<b>a) Number of individuals/agreed exceptions/other units</b>	<b>38381</b>
	The FRV for population is the same as reported in 2007. For further details please see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
	<b>b) Operator</b>	
	<b>c) FRP is unknown (indicated by "true")</b>	<b>False</b>
	For further details please see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.4.15 Reason for change</b> Is the difference between the value reported at 2.4.1 or 2.4.2 and the previous reporting round mainly due to:	<b>a) Genuine change?</b>	<b>False</b>
	The apparent decrease in the population estimate is not genuine but due to use of a different method of estimating the population. There is thought to have been a genuine increase in population size.	
	<b>b) Improved knowledge/more accurate data?</b>	<b>False</b>
	The apparent decrease in the population estimate is not genuine but due to use of a different method of estimating the population. There is thought to have been a genuine increase in population size.	
	<b>c) Use of different method (e.g. "Range tool")?</b>	<b>True</b>
	The apparent decrease in the population estimate is not genuine but due to use of a different method of estimating the population. There is thought to have been a genuine increase in population size.	

2.5 Habitat for the species	
2.5.1 Area estimation	<b>76036</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.  There is thought to be a sufficient amount of habitat in the UK to support a viable population of the species.
2.5.2 Year or period	<b>2000-2012</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.
2.5.3 Method used Habitat for the species	<b>Estimate based on expert opinion with no or minimal sampling</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.
2.5.4 Quality of the habitat	<b>a) Habitat quality</b> <b>Unknown</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.
	<b>b) Assessment method</b> <b>M. Putorius is not strongly associated with a single habitat; there is insufficient reliable information to assess the quality of the habitat.</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.
2.5.5 Short-term trend Period	<b>2001-2012</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.
2.5.6 Short-term trend Trend direction	<b>unknown</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.
2.5.7 Long-term trend Period Optional	
2.5.8 Long-term trend Trend direction Optional	
2.5.9 Area of suitable habitat for the species	<b>a) Value in km<sup>2</sup></b> <b>76036</b>
	<b>b) Absence of data indicated as '0'</b>
2.5.10 Reason for change Is the difference between the value reported at 2.5.1 and the previous reporting round mainly due to	<b>a) Genuine change?</b> <b>False</b>
	Surface area of habitat was reported as unknown in 2007 so no comparison is possible.
	<b>b) Improved knowledge/more accurate data?</b> <b>False</b>

	Surface area of habitat was reported as unknown in 2007 so no comparison is possible.	
	<b>c) Use of different method (e.g. "Range tool")?</b>	<b>False</b>
	Surface area of habitat was reported as unknown in 2007 so no comparison is possible.	

<b>2.6 Main pressures</b>		
<b>a) Pressure</b>	<b>b) Ranking</b>	<b>c) Pollution qualifier</b>
	H = high importance (max 5 entries) M = medium importance L = low importance	
A07: use of biocides, hormones and chemicals	H	
A10: Restructuring agricultural land holding	H	
F03: Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial)	H	
A02: modification of cultivation practices	M	
D01: Roads, paths and railroads	M	
I01: invasive non-native species	M	
I03: introduced genetic material, GMO	M	
E01: Urbanised areas, human habitation	L	

For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.	
<b>2.6.1 Method used – Pressures</b>	<b>mainly based on expert judgement and other data</b>
	For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.

<b>2.7 Threats</b>		
<b>a) Threat</b>	<b>b) Ranking</b>	<b>c) Pollution qualifier</b>
	H = high importance (max 5 entries) M = medium importance L = low importance	
A07: use of biocides, hormones and chemicals	H	

A10: Restructuring agricultural land holding	H	
F03: Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial)	H	
I03: introduced genetic material, GMO	H	
D01: Roads, paths and railroads	M	
A02: modification of cultivation practices	L	
E01: Urbanised areas, human habitation	L	

For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.

**2.7.1 Method used – Threats**

**expert opinion**

For further details see the 2013 Article 17 UK Approach document and relevant country-level reporting information.

**2.8 Complementary information**

**2.8.1 Justification of % thresholds for trends**

**2.8.2 Other relevant information**

**2.8.3 Trans-boundary assessment**

**2.9 Conclusions (*assessment of conservation status at end of reporting period*)**

**2.9.1 Range**

**a) Conclusion**

**Favourable**

Range has been assessed as Favourable, because it is approximately equal to the FRV, and the short-term trend is stable.

**b) Qualifier**

**2.9.2 Population**

**a) Conclusion**

**Favourable**

Population has been assessed as Favourable because the population is greater than the FRV, and the short term trend is increasing.

**b) Qualifier**

<b>2.9.3 Habitat for the species</b>	<b>a) Conclusion</b>	<b>Favourable</b>
	Habitat has been assessed as Favourable because there is thought to be sufficient amount of habitat for the species to be viable, and although habitat quality and trend are unknown, the fact that range and population are favourable suggests that habitat is not a major problem for this species.	
	<b>b) Qualifier</b>	
<b>2.9.4 Future prospects</b>	<b>a) Conclusion</b>	<b>Favourable</b>
	Future prospects is assessed as Favourable on the basis of assessments of the future prospects of the three parameters, range, population and habitat for species: Range future prospects: Good Population future prospects: Good Habitat future prospects: Good Overall future prospects: Favourable.  Main pressures and threats to the species are not thought to be significant in the considered timescale. Reduced gamekeeping pressure is encouraging expansion of the range and population in England and Wales.	
	<b>b) Qualifier</b>	
<b>2.9.5 Overall assessment of Conservation Status</b>	<b>Favourable</b>	
	The overall assessment is Favourable because all parameters have been assessed as Favourable.	
<b>2.9.6 Overall trend in Conservation Status</b>		

**3 Natura 2000 coverage & conservation measures - Annex II species**  
*(only applies to species listed under Annex II of the Directive)*

<b>3.1 Population</b>		
<b>3.1.1 Population size</b>  Estimation of population size included in the SAC network	<b>a) Unit</b>	

	<b>b) Minimum</b>	
	<b>c) Maximum</b>	
<b>3.1.2 Method used</b>		
<b>3.1.3 Trend of population size within the network</b> (short-term trend)  Optional		

<b>3.2 Conservation measures</b>														
Conservation measures taken (i.e. already being implemented) within the reporting period and provided information about their importance, location and evaluation.														
<b>3.2.1 Measure</b>	<b>3.2.2 Type</b>					<b>3.2.3 Ranking</b>  H = high importance  M = medium importance  L = low importance	<b>3.2.4 Location</b>  where the measure is PRIMARILY applied			<b>3.2.5 Broad evaluation of the measure</b>				
	a) Legal/statutory	b) Administrative	c) Contractual	d) Recurrent	e) One-off		a) Inside	b) Outside	c) Both inside & outside	a) Maintain	b) Enhance	c) Long term	d) No effect	e) Unknown