

# RESTORE4Cs insights on policies for coastal wetlands to enhance Europe's biodiversity and climate resilience

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### ► EU, international and national policy inventory on coastal wetland restoration and conservation

**27 EU & international policies** which address wetlands

Nature/Biodiversity [7]

Climate [5]

Regional sea conventions [3]

Marine/Coastal [2]

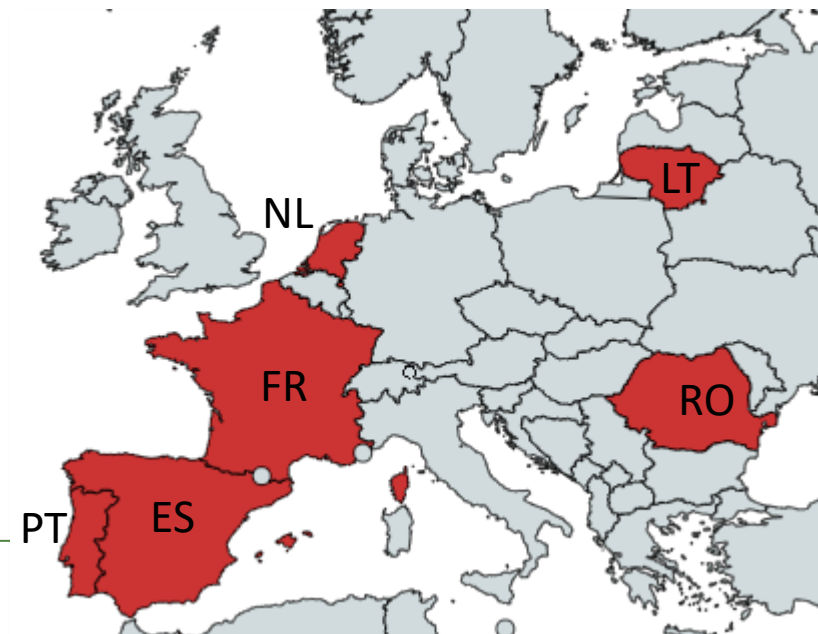
Water [3]

Pollution/quality [2]

Agriculture/soil [2]

Cross-cutting [3]

**National policies & governance setting** for coastal wetlands conservation and restoration in **6 EU countries**



## Few EU & international policies explicitly refer to coastal wetlands

| <u>Policies addressing wetlands</u>                                    | <u>Coastal wetlands explicitly mentioned</u> |
|--|--|
| <b><u>Nature/biodiversity policies</u></b>                             |  |
| Ramsar Convention on Wetlands  | Y  |
| Global Biodiversity Framework  | N  |
| Birds Directive  | N  |
| Habitats Directive   | Y  |
| Green infrastructure Strategy  | Y  |
| EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030  | Y  |
| EU Nature Restoration Regulation                                       | Y  |
| <b><u>Regional sea conventions</u></b>                                 |  |
| Barcelona Convention   | Y  |
| Helsinki Convention/HELCOM Recommendation                              | N  |
| OSPAR Convention/The North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030     | Y  |
| <b><u>EU marine/coastal policies</u></b>                               |  |
| Strategic Guidelines for the Sustainable Development of EU Aquaculture | N  |
| Sustainable Blue Economy Communication                                 | Y  |

Most policies which explicitly cover coastal wetlands are

**nature and biodiversity policies**

**and marine policies/regional sea conventions**

| Policies addressing wetlands                    | Coastal wetlands explicitly mentioned |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Climate policies</b>                         |                                       |
| UNFCCC/Paris Agreement/IPCC Wetlands Supplement | Y                                     |
| EU LULUCF Regulation                            | N                                     |
| EU Adaptation Strategy                          | N                                     |
| Sustainable Carbon Cycles Communication         | Y                                     |
| EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework       | N                                     |
| <b>Water management policies</b>                |                                       |
| WFD   | N                                     |
| Floods Directive                                | N                                     |
| EU Water Scarcity & Droughts Policy             | N                                     |
| <b>Pollution/quality</b>                        |                                       |
| Groundwater Directive                           | N                                     |
| Farm to Fork Strategy                           | N                                     |
| <b>Agriculture &amp; soil policies</b>          |                                       |
| CAP   | N                                     |
| EU Soil Strategy                                | N                                     |
| <b>Cross-cutting policies</b>                   |                                       |
| EIA Directive                                   | N                                     |
| INSPIRE Directive                               | N                                     |
| EU Sustainable Finance Taxonomy                 | Y                                     |

Further policies with explicit reference to coastal wetlands are the **EU Sustainable Carbon Cycles Communication**, the **IPCC Wetlands Supplement** and the **EU Sustainable Finance Taxonomy**



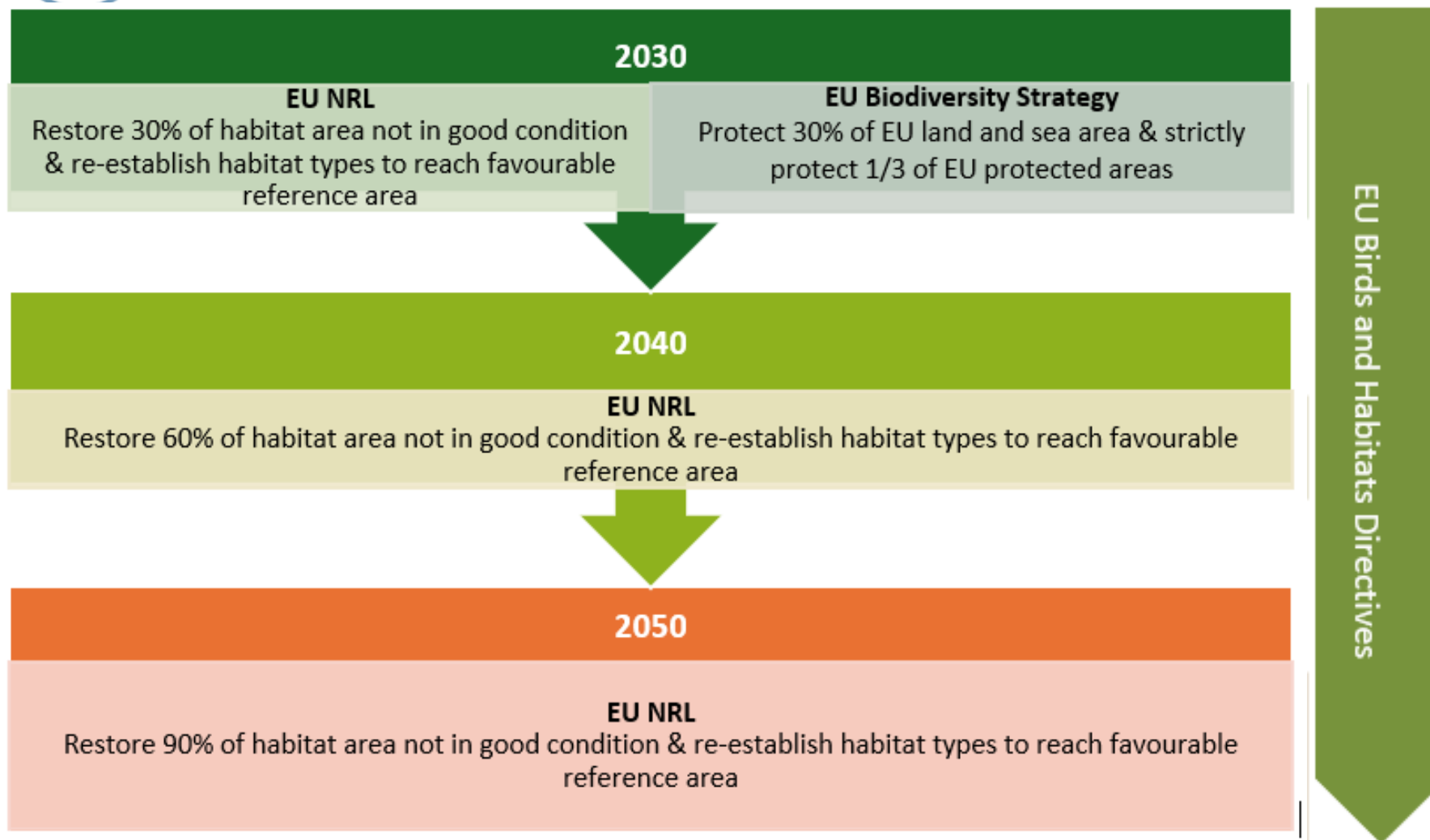
## Policy definitions of coastal wetlands

- A consistent definition of coastal wetlands is missing in the EU policy framework
  - Habitats Directive and EU Nature Restoration Regulation include lists of coastal wetland habitats
  - Majority of policies refer to single habitats or relevant terms (saltmarshes, mangroves, seagrass beds, tidal habitats, estuaries and blue carbon)
  - Definitions of coastal wetlands are provided mostly by international policy instruments (Ramsar Convention, IPCC Wetlands Supplement).
  - Wetlands definitions used by EU countries for the national GHG inventories differ from country to country, as the use of the 2013 IPCC Wetlands Supplement is not obligatory

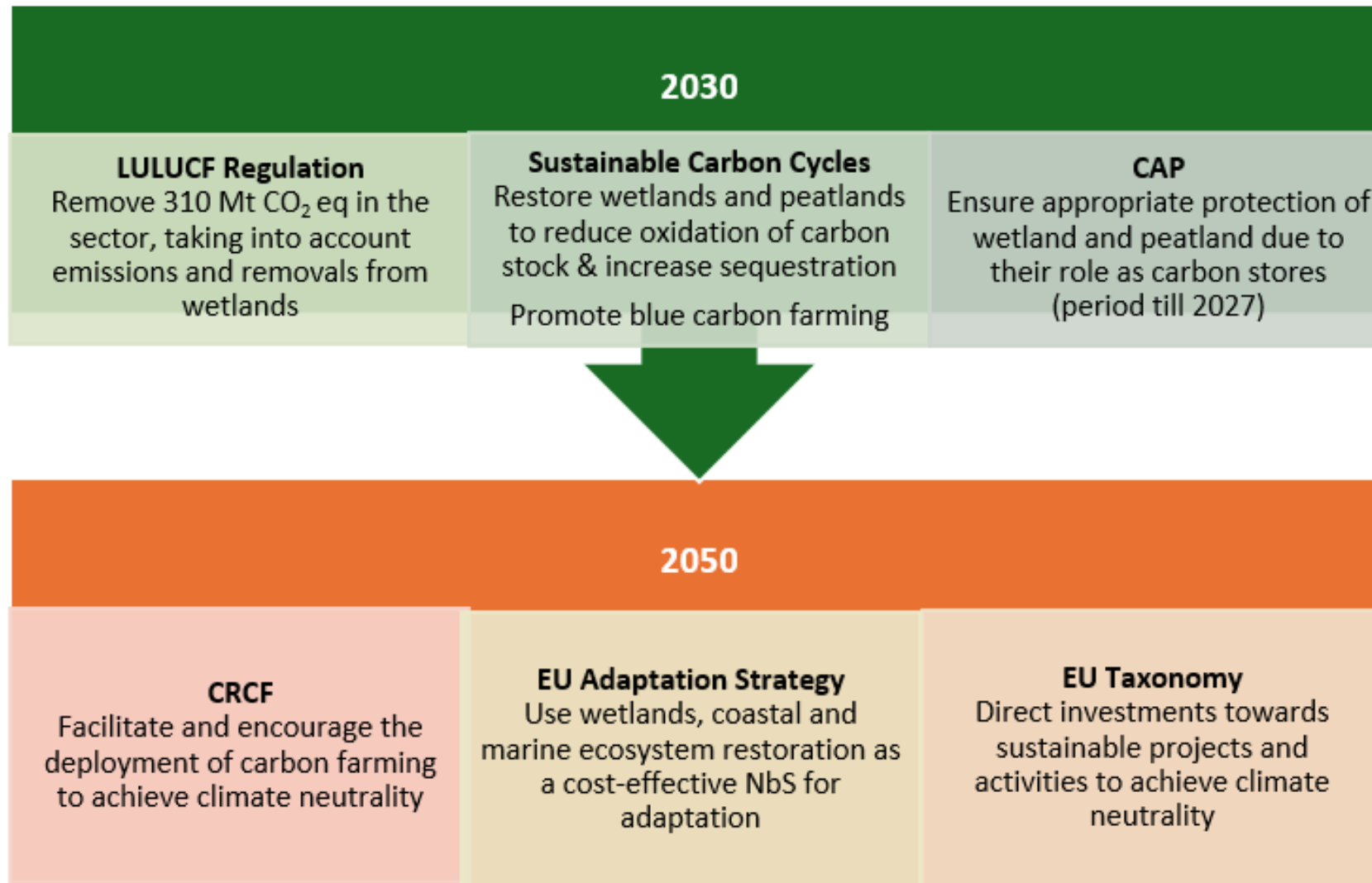




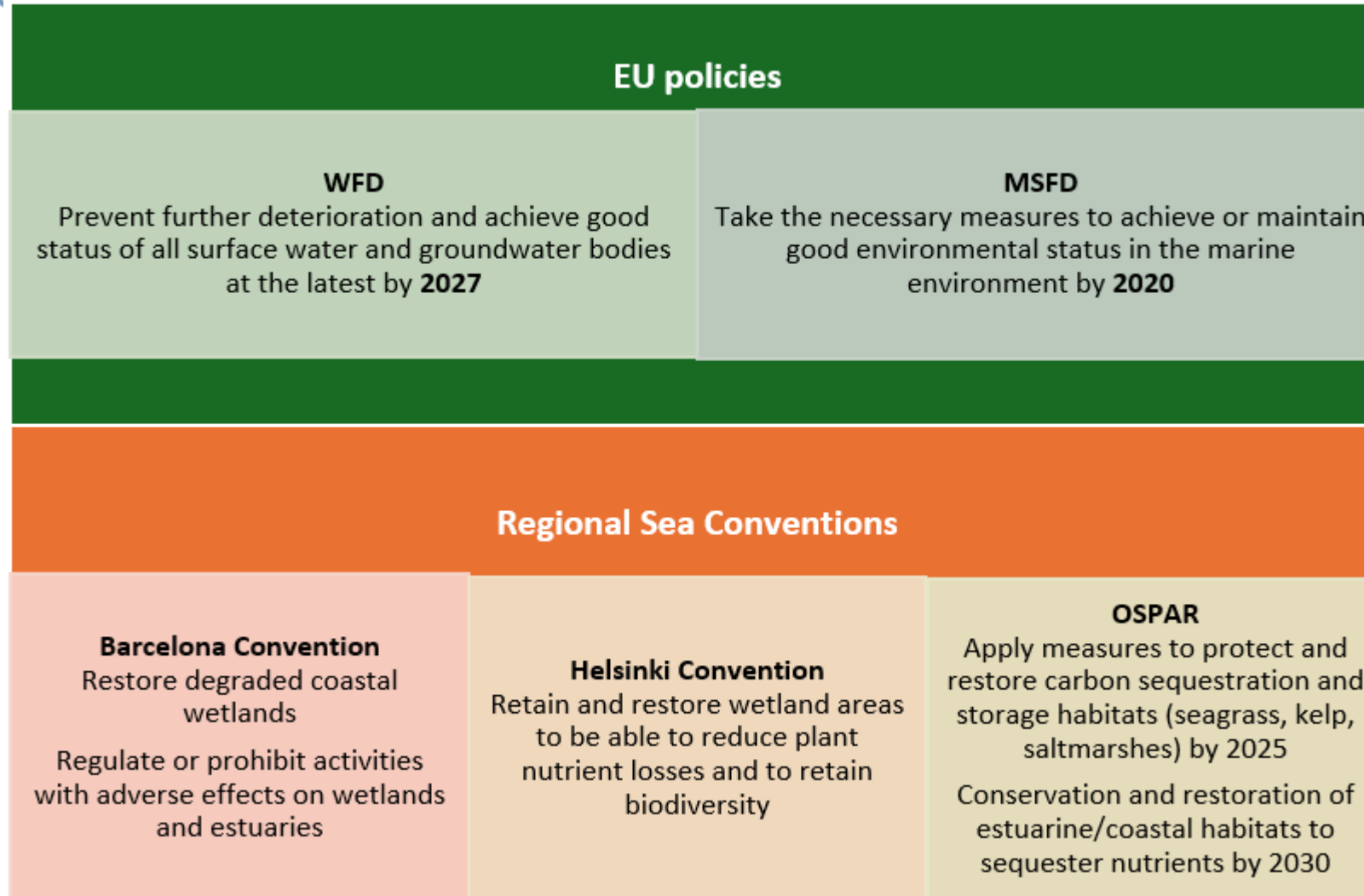
## Key EU policy targets: Nature & Biodiversity



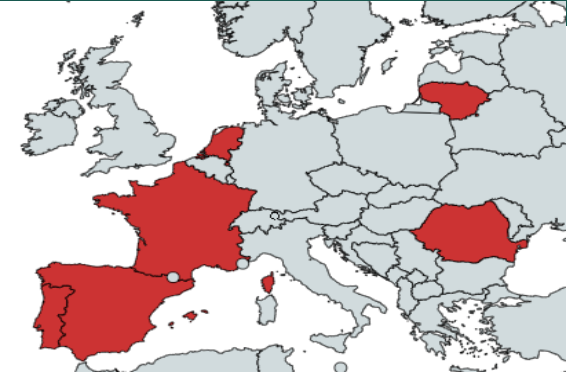
## Key EU Policy Targets: Climate Mitigation & Adaptation



## Key Policy Targets: Ocean & Water







## National policies in 6 EU countries: general trends

- National restoration/biodiversity strategies or restoration plans in place in Spain, Portugal, Lithuania, France, with wetlands among the targeted ecosystems
- More detailed (coastal) wetland policy frameworks in place in France and Spain – **examples of specific wetlands policy targets:**
  - France Wetland restoration target of **50,000 ha by 2026** (National Wetlands Plan)  
**Double the area** of wetland surface in **high protection by 2030** (National Wetlands Plan, 2022; National Strategy for Protection Areas 2030)
  - Spain **Develop a process to designate** priority ecosystems incl. wetlands as **strictly protected areas by 2030** (National Strategic Plan for Natural Heritage and Biodiversity to 2030)



## Good practice policies on coastal wetlands for climate resilience and biodiversity

### ES: Andalusian carbon offsetting mechanisms and coastal wetland restoration

- Andalusian Law on Climate Change and Energy Transition (2018) introduced voluntary mechanism for carbon offsetting projects
- It supports carbon offset projects including restoration and conservation of **coastal ecosystems, e.g. seagrass meadows**
- The law facilitated the development of the blue carbon offset methodology specifically tailored to wetlands and seagrasses
- Recognises importance of blue carbon projects for emissions offsetting

### FR: Low Carbon Label (Label Bas-Carbon)

- Governmental standard for carbon offset projects certification (2019)
- Aims to incentivise projects that reduce emissions and sequester carbon
- Scope extended to include a method for quantifying carbon sequestration resulting from the **prevention of *Posidonia* meadows degradation (2023)**
- Certified projects must undergo recertification every five years and can operate for up to 30 years



## Key messages

- **Few EU & international policies explicitly refer to coastal wetlands** (mainly nature/biodiversity policies and marine policies/regional sea conventions). **Nature/biodiversity policies and regional sea conventions** also the source of most legally binding targets for coastal wetlands conservation and restoration.
- **Climate/adaptation policies** include non-binding provisions and voluntary action on wetlands restoration. A number of **good practice policies at national and regional level** promote coastal wetland restoration for more climate resilience
- Consistent definition of coastal wetlands missing in the EU policy framework. **A unified definition of wetland ecosystems harmonised with Ramsar and other global frameworks should be introduced in EU policies** to eliminate differences in policy implementation





Thank you!

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