

Backgrounds and objectives

The EU Biodiversity Strategy aims to halt the loss of biodiversity, improve the conservation status of protected species and habitats as well as maintain and restore ecosystems and their services.

In continuation of the Atlantic biogeographical process to support the EU Biodiversity Strategy and in close connection to the German National Strategy on Biological Diversity, the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) promoted a research and development project to devise management concepts that lead to an improvement of the conservation status of selected habitats and species protected by Natura 2000 in the Atlantic region of Germany.

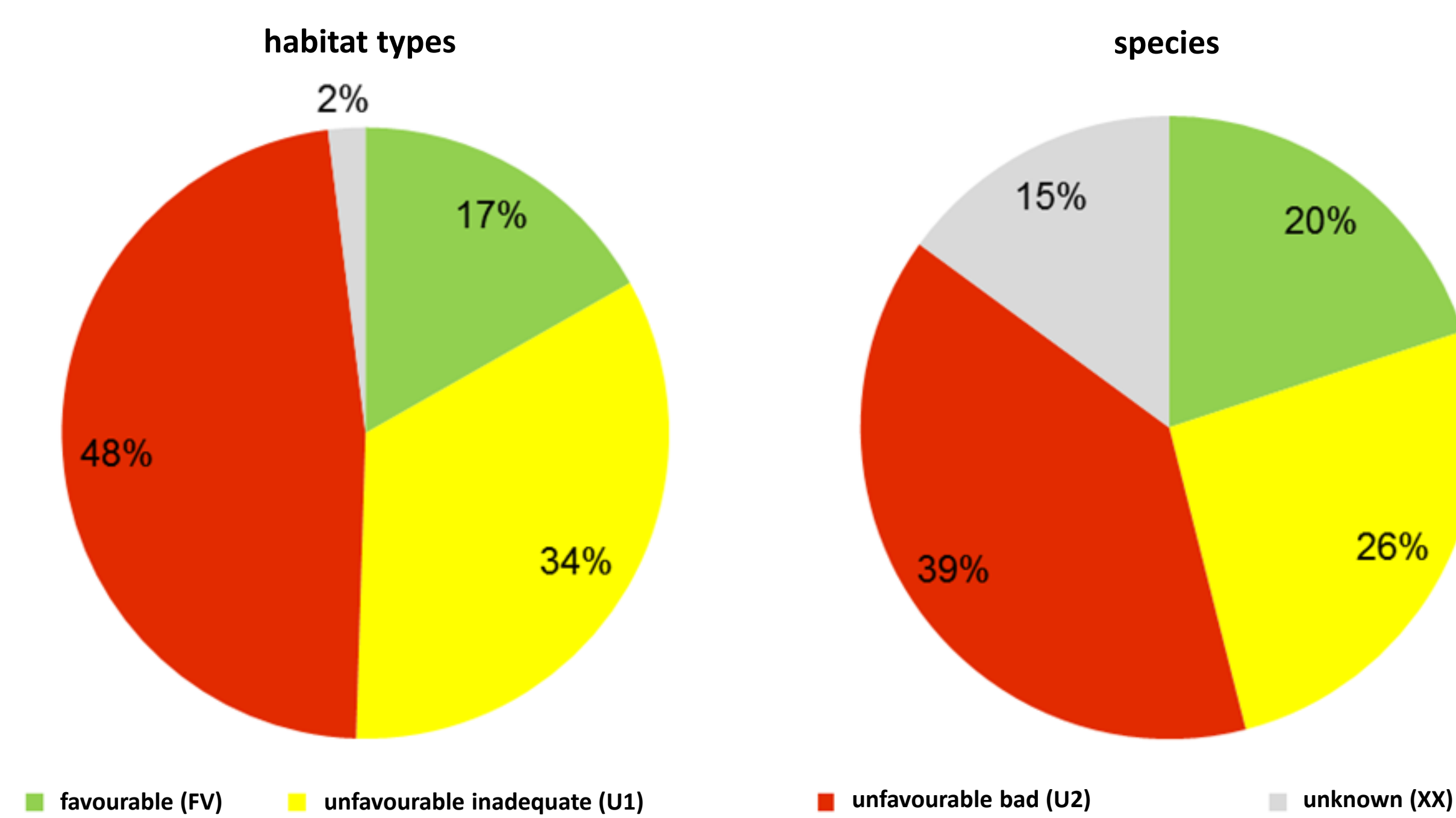


Fig. 1: Conservation status of habitat types and species in the Atlantic biogeographical region of Germany (http://www.bfn.de/0316_nat-bericht_ergebnisse2013.html, changed)

Contents

In the course of the project 59 management concepts for 38 selected habitats of Annex I and 21 species of Annex II, IV and V of the Habitats Directive have been developed. As a basis for the selection and description of the measures, an extensive review of related publications and research projects was conducted. Beside the detailed descriptions of management measures, the developed concepts contain various parameters of the selected habitats and species according to the 2013 German Report under the Habitats Directive. The respective management suggestions refer to selected threats and pressures and intend to be recommendations for measures counteracting these negative factors. Each management recommendation contains links to websites of exemplary projects and bibliographic references for an easy access to further information.

The management concepts are subdivided into six sections:

- Description/characterisation and occurrence
- Conservation status
- Threats and pressures
- Future prospects
- Recommendations for conservation measures
- Literature

Publishing the results

The backgrounds, the objectives, the methods and selected results of the project will soon be published in a BfN-script (ACKERMANN, STREITBERGER & LEHRKE 2016). This script explains and complements the results of the project which are published as 59 management concepts on the website of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation under this address:

http://www.bfn.de/0316_verbesserung_erhaltungszustand.html

Need for action, addressees and stakeholders

The management concepts for each of the selected Natura 2000 habitat types and species are supposed to give all relevant information needed to improve the conservation status of as many species and habitat types as possible in the Atlantic biogeographical region of Germany.

The 59 management concepts on the BfN website address local and regional administrations and institutions assigned with the implementation of the Habitats Directive and especially the local stakeholders which are responsible for the realization of the conservation measures (for example biological stations, landcare associations).

Example for a management concept: The otter (*Lutra lutra*)

The otter originally occurred throughout Europe. Hunting, pollution of water bodies and road traffic deaths caused a population decline. Finally, the otter became extinct in large parts of Germany and Central Europe due to landscape fragmentation and habitat destruction. Since some time, the protection efforts are effective and the otter is spreading again.

So far, the conservation status in the Atlantic biogeographical region of Germany did not improve compared to the unfavourable-inadequate (U1) assessment in the last German Report. Only the future prospects are assessed as favourable. To improve the other parameters and thus the overall conservation status, the management concept for the otter suggests the following measures:

- Biotope design and renaturation to improve the habitat suitability
- Species-adapted river maintenance
- Measures referring to road and bridge structures to decrease the amount of road casualties
- Identification of disturbance reduced / free areas
- Promotion of otter-adapted fishing and agricultural management
- Prevention/ removal of river barriers
- Prevention of death in fish traps
- Reduction of conflicts or damage caused by the otter
- Reduction of nutrient and pollutant input
- Support of species rich fish populations with a natural age-structure

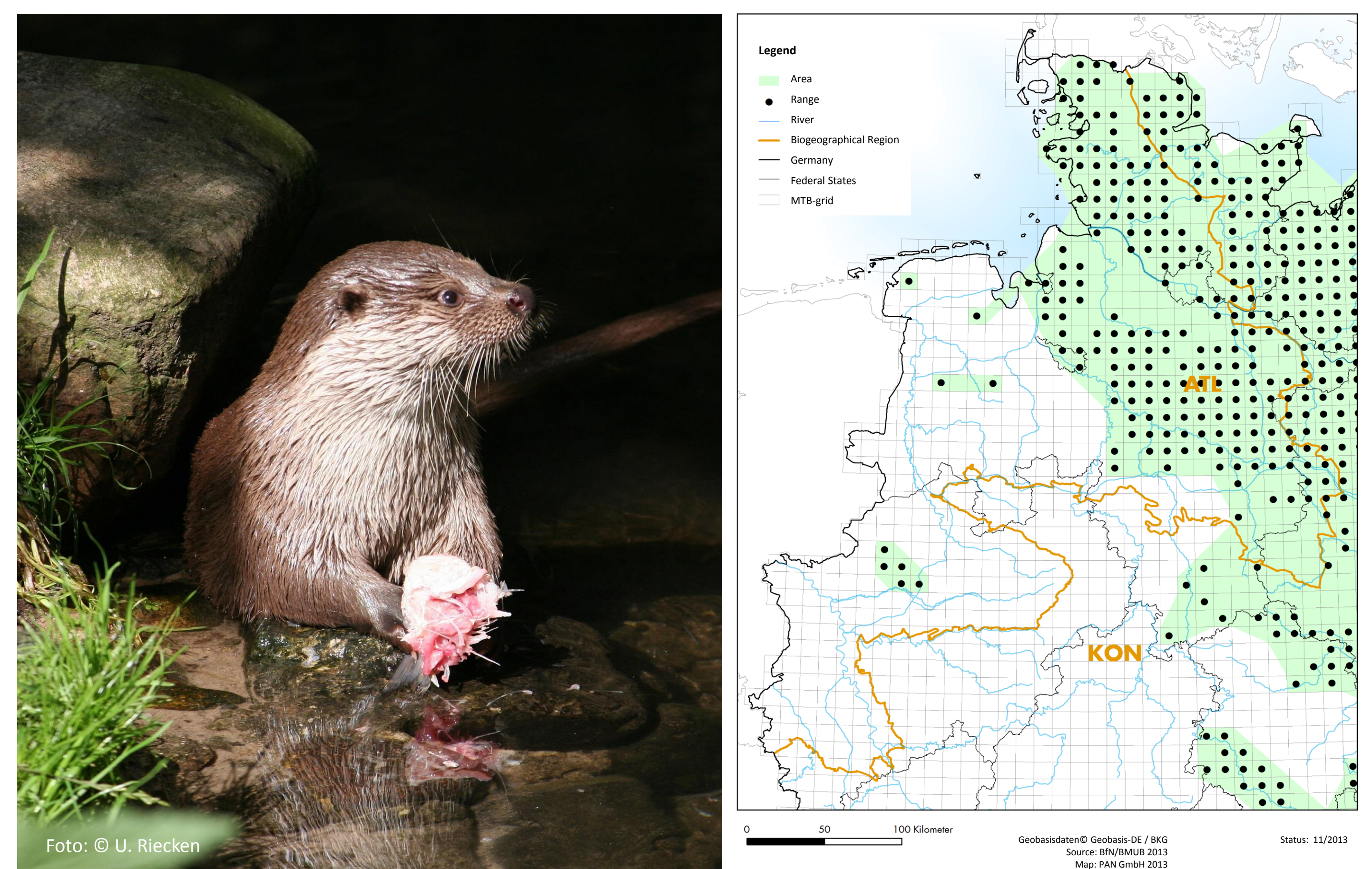


Fig. 2: Otter (*Lutra lutra*) in its natural habitat (left); Area and Range of the otter in the Atlantic biogeographical region of Germany (right).

The Research and Development Project (F+E) "Contribution to the improvement of the conservation status of Natura 2000 habitats and species: development of management concepts for selected Annex species and habitats of the Habitats Directive in the Atlantic biogeographical region" (FKZ 3511 82 1600) was supported by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB).

Literature

- ACKERMANN, W., STREITBERGER, M. & LEHRKE, S. (2016): Maßnahmenkonzepte für ausgewählte Arten und Lebensraumtypen der FFH-Richtlinie zur Verbesserung des Erhaltungszustands von Natura 2000-Schutzgütern in der atlantischen biogeografischen Region - Zielstellung, Methoden und ausgewählte Ergebnisse. BfN-Skript 449, Bonn-Bad Godesberg (in preparation).
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