

## Laufen Monitoring Meeting December 2019

By Martin Warren, Head of Development, BC Europe



This was the first meeting of the partners in the Assessing Butterflies in Europe (ABLE) project. It was held at the beautiful conference centre in Laufen, courtesy of ANL (Bavarian Institute of Landscape and Conservation). Fifty-nine people attend from twenty-nine countries. Copies of the presentations can be found on the BCE website [here](#).

The meeting was opened by *Chris van Swaay*, Chair of BCE, who explained that this was an important moment, half way through the ABLE contract with the EU. The aims of the meeting were to update partners on progress; to get feedback on tools available and in development; and to share best practice in developing schemes. Sue Collins then explained the origins of the project and its relevance to developing EU policies to protect the environment and improve the sustainability of agriculture.



*Vujadin Kovacevic* from DG Environment, then outlined the EU Pollinators Initiative and the relevance of butterfly monitoring to EU policy making. He outlined the Initiative, which was adopted by the EU in June 2018. In addition to direct actions to conserve pollinators, they will be developing a Pollinator Monitoring programme in the next few years. The opening session was completed by a review of progress with ABLE from *David Roy* and *Sue Collins*.

The main day of the meeting was concerned with a series of presentations on the European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (eBMS) and the tools being made available to contributing schemes. *David Roy* explained the eBMS data entry website, and *Xavier Mustagh* from the Luxembourg BMS described their experience of using it. *Karolis Kazlauskis* from CEH explained the new mobile app for monitoring butterflies and *Reto Schmucki* explained how the eBMS database is constructed and its current coverage. As of 2017 it contained data from **7,308 transects in 15 countries**, and 56,000 km of transect were walked.

*Chris van Swaay* then described the new butterfly indicators that are being produced from the eBMS dataset. They include the updated Grassland Indicator but new indicators for all species, as well as indicators for woodland and wetland habitats, and a climate change indicator. These will be published in 2020. *Reto Schmucki* then described the potential for an additional set of indicators looking at butterfly phenology across the biogeographical regions of Europe, and using by spatial datasets to assess butterfly density and diversity in different habitats.

After lunch there were two workshop sessions. The first was led by *Cristina Sevilleja* on progress with developing new monitoring networks. There were inspiring talks presenting the different actions done for the creation of a BMS. The different coordinators from Italy (*Simona Bonelli*), Portugal (*Eva Monteiro*), Austria (*Johannes Rüdissler, Manfred Pendl and Daniela Lehner*) and Hungary (*András Szabadfalv*). The second workshop was led by *David Roy* and *Emily Dennis* on technical aspects of how to analyse monitoring data.

The meeting was concluded by a fascinating talk from *Alena Klvaňová* who described the development of the Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS), which had extraordinary parallels with the development of the eBMS. *Matthias Dolek* and *Adam Korozi* then described new monitoring systems in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, and the meeting was concluded by Sue Collins and David Roy who described the next steps for ABLE and the eBMS.



In conclusion it was a very positive meeting with great enthusiasm from participants. Everyone was very keen to get involved to make the eBMS a success. The data that the scheme will generate will be of utmost importance to assess the impact of our rapidly changing world on biodiversity and insects in particular, as well as helping to design more effective conservation programmes.

