

21st Meeting of the Advisory Committee

Zandvoort, Netherlands, 18 – 20 April 2016



Report of IWG on Quality of Assessments and Experience and Skills of Experts

Members of IWG:

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The IWG's work is based on Res. 7.14 which instructs the AC "to develop criteria of the required standard experience and skills of experts assessing the impact of projects, plans and programmes on populations of European Bats". The IWG also agreed on defining standards for the evaluation process in the future.

Two questionnaires were prepared and sent out: the first was submitted to all parties in order to gather information on the existence of legal obligations, licensing system/procedure and standards of qualification regarding the following areas:

- Conducting bat surveys including acoustic methods;
- Assessments of impacts on bats;
- Post-construction bat monitoring.

Overall, we received 30 answers from 29 countries which will be discussed during the meeting of the IWG. The answers basically show that in many countries there are no existing standards. This is all the more true for people in charge of evaluating assessments, for whom the absence of set standards concerns almost all countries under examination.

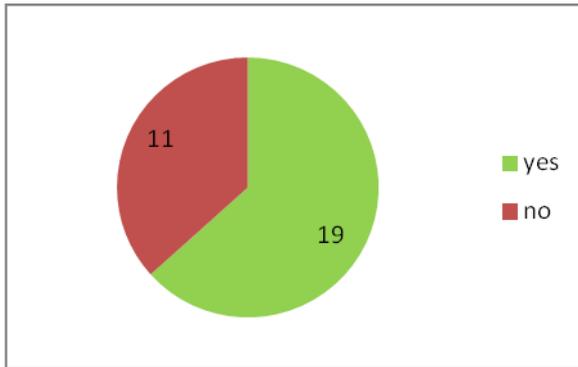
A second questionnaire was distributed among the members of the IWG regarding appropriate skills, experience and knowledge of experts. We received a few answers which will be used to set the stage for group discussion during the meeting of the AC.

Below we present a summary of the outcome of the first questionnaire ($n = 30$). Pie charts summarize the percentages of yes/no answers, whereas the text highlighted in bold (in boxes) offers a synthesis of the detailed responses provided by the parties interviewed.

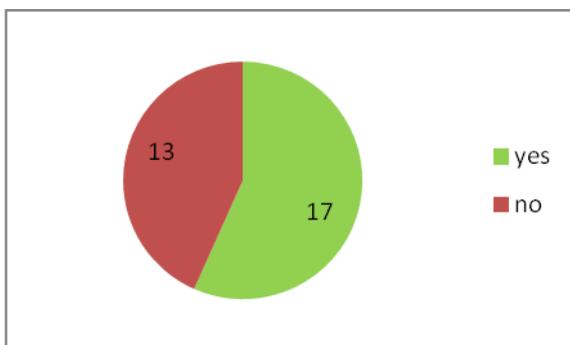
I) Basic legislation part

1. Does your country have legislation/guidelines for the following three areas relating to assessment studies on bats?

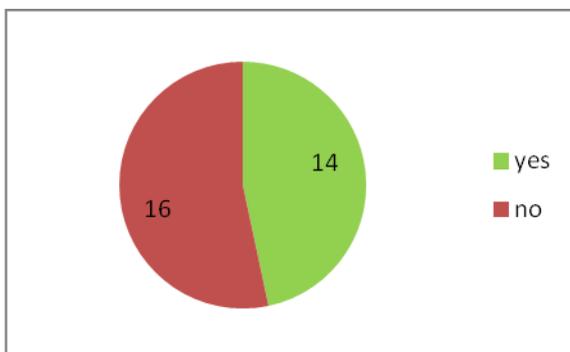
- a) Conducting preconstruction surveys



b) Assessments of impacts of projects/plans where bats might be concerned



c) Post-construction monitoring of projects where bats are concerned



If yes, please provide details:

Which level? E.g. national/project level:

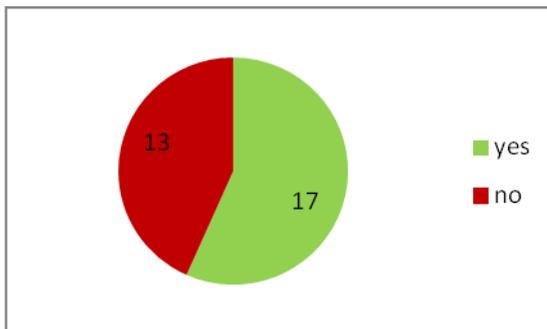
Overall, guidelines establishing how to conduct EIAs appear to be more common than actual legislation. Where legislation exists, bats are more often covered within the general framework regarding wildlife for preconstruction surveys, assessment of impacts or post-construction monitoring rather than being targeted as a separate faunal component. In some countries specific guidelines only exist for certain infrastructures such as wind turbines or roads. Post-construction monitoring, where present, is established by law but implemented at project level.

II) Who is doing *assessment studies* on bats and in what kind of legal framework?

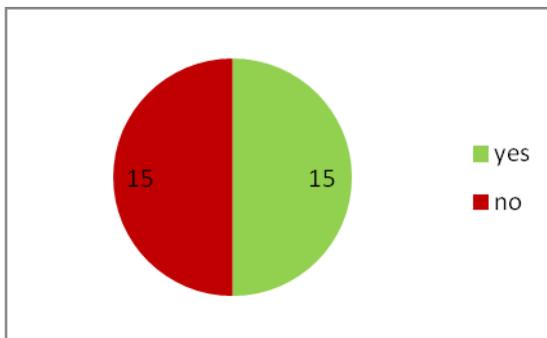
2. Does your country implement these legislation/guidelines (where applicable) through a licensing system/procedure for experts/consultancies that

If answer(s) are yes, please provide details (authorities in charge, whether licence is permanent or not) and type of survey methods it includes (handling bats, acoustic methods, underground surveys, sampling for DNA etc.).

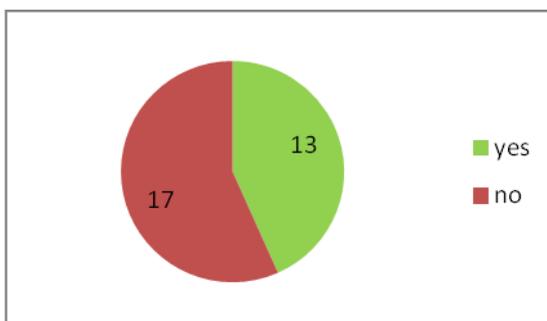
a) Conduct surveys



b) Assess impacts of projects/plans where bats might be concerned



c) Conduct post-construction monitoring of projects where bats are concerned

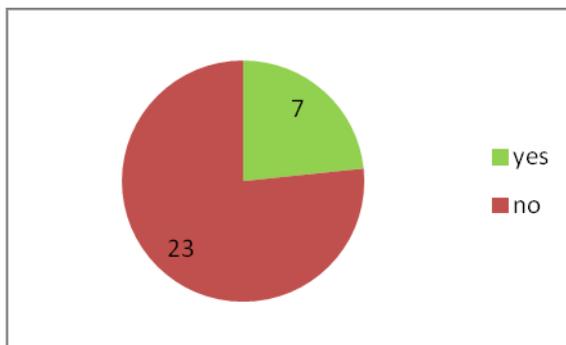


Which level? E.g. national/project level:

Subjects doing surveys vary across countries including experts, NGOs or companies. Few countries appear to have a well-structured licensing system (i.e. featuring different licenses depending on the kind of activity planned), and in general only invasive techniques (capture, handling, tissue sampling etc.) are subjected to licensing. Where a license system for surveys is available, licences are generally temporary (e.g. one year or project's duration).

Licensing for post-construction is less represented in the overall sample and mostly takes place on a project scale.

3. Does your country have a list of experts/consultancies allowed to do *assessment studies* on bats in planning/development processes?



If yes, please answer also on the following questions:

a) What are the criteria for listing?

Such lists are present only in few countries, in several of which they are informal and managed by non-governmental organizations

b) Who is responsible for preparing and keeping up-to-date this list?

Please see above

c) How often is the list updated?

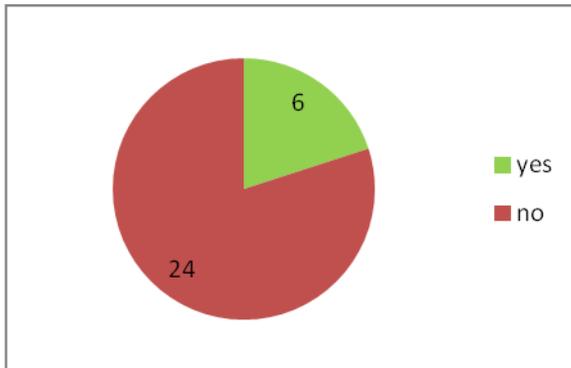
Few answers to this point, very different approaches (from yearly to ongoing)

Which level? E.g. National/project level:

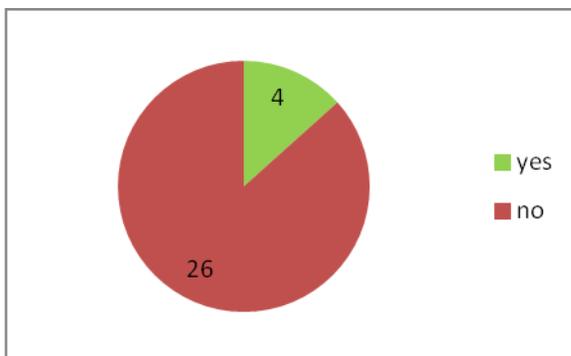
Mostly national

4. Are there any defined standards for qualifications/required skills /experience for people doing *assessment studies* on bats in your country for the following three areas?

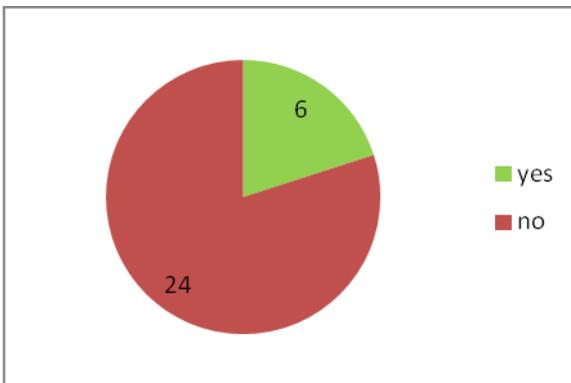
a) Conducting surveys



b) Assessments of impacts of projects/plans where bats might be concerned



c) Post-construction monitoring of projects where bats are concerned

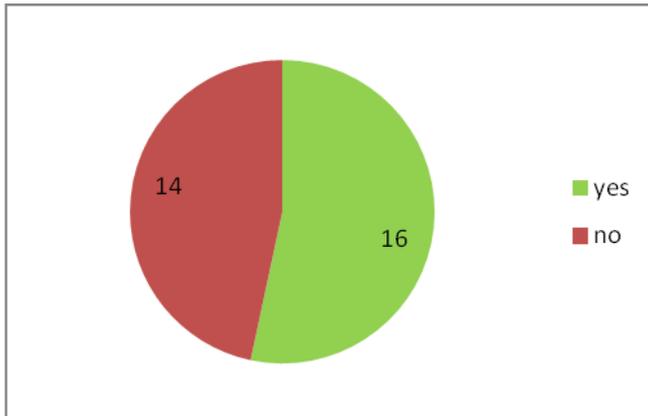


Which level? E.g. national/project level

Overall, few countries have established standards for their experts and these rarely appear to regard specifically bats, instead being rather general (e.g. experts must have at least x years of experience with EIA, hold a scientific degree etc.)

III) Who assesses the *assessment studies* on bats?

5. Is the quality of *assessment studies* assessed in your country?

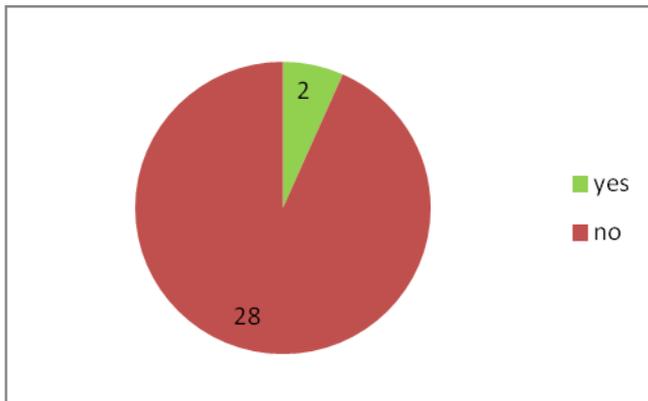


If yes, please provide information of responsible body, e.g.

- Governmental body
- Independent expert referee
- Other (please describe)

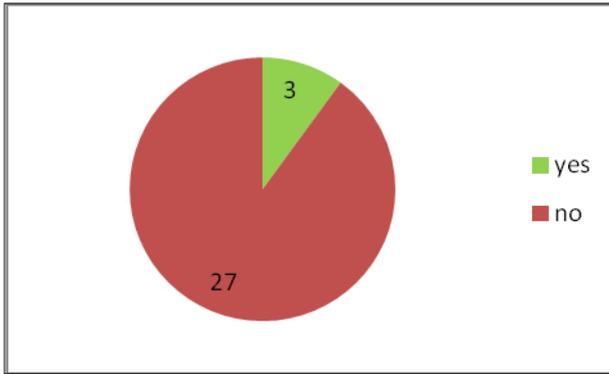
Studies are assessed for their quality / reliability in slightly more than half the countries considered and in most cases a national or regional governmental body is responsible for the assessment.

6. Are there any defined standards for qualification/required skills/experience for those assessing submitted *assessment studies* on bats in your country?



In two countries only standards are defined but no specific expertise on bats is requested

7. Is there a system in place to ensure that those involved in assessment of *assessment studies* are up-to-date with the newest conservation threats and solutions for bats (e.g. attending lectures, training courses, symposia/conferences)?



Again, very few countries have systems in place to update people in charge of assessing assessment studies and even in countries which responded positively it is unclear whether a real *system* is present in all cases.