



Bridging the gap between policy and knowledge
on biodiversity in Europe

Method 18

Subject-wide Evidence Syntheses (Summaries and synopses)

Summary of method

Flexible, transparent approach to collate and summarise existing research evidence over a broad topic in a standard format. Interventions, actions, or impacts are first listed (can use a process of Solution Scanning). Review methods are flexible and pragmatic, selecting and reporting the best available search methodology, with a focus on existing systematic reviews and systematic maps where possible.

Key references

This method underpins the Conservation Evidence database of summarised evidence (www.conservazionevidence.com).

Sutherland WJ, Taylor NG, MacFarlane D, Amano T, Christie AP, Dicks LV, et al. (2019a) Building a tool to overcome barriers in research-implementation spaces: The conservation evidence database. *Biological Conservation* 238, 108199. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2019.108199>

Sutherland WJ et al (2019b) *What Works in Conservation?* OpenBook Publishers. Available from www.conservazionevidence.com or <https://www.openbookpublishers.com/product/1031>

Examples of application

This approach was used by Natural England (an English government agency) to help select actions to include in Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife package of agri-environment scheme options, in the English Countryside Stewardship Scheme, introduced in 2015 (Dicks *et al.* 2015).



Dicks LV, Baude M, Roberts SPM, Phillips J, Green M, Carvell C (2015) How much flower-rich habitat is enough for wild pollinators? Answering a key policy question with incomplete knowledge. *Ecological Entomology* 40 (S1), 22-35.

Subject-wide Evidence Syntheses (Summaries and synopses)

Cost	Staff (12-120 months FTE), subscriptions (article access), expertise (web platform manager), web design
Time required	12-120 months
Repeatability	High (if conducted, recorded and archived properly)
Transparency	High (if conducted well, i.e. endorsing organisations)
Risk of bias	Moderate-low (due to the methodology, which may not be comprehensive)
Scale (or level of detail)	Independent of scale (any)
Capacity for participation	Potential consultation throughout (using an expert advisory board, not public consultation)
Data demand	High (no reanalysis of existing data)
Types of knowledge	Scientific/technical; explicit
Types of output	Interactive website of narrative evidence, user-friendly written report plus other communication materials (e.g. policy brief), identification of knowledge gap/knowledge cluster
Specific expertise required	Training, good writing skills, topic expert, web management specialist

Strengths

- Easy to read/user-friendly
- Updatable
- Includes expert engagement
- Open access
- Appropriate for very broad topic areas

Weaknesses

- Report typically written only in English
- High time/resource (staff and expertise/training/access to research papers) requirement
- May facilitate vote-counting by end users



Eclipse was created in 2016 to help governments, institutions, businesses and NGOs make better-informed decisions when it comes to biodiversity in Europe. www.eclipse.eu

