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

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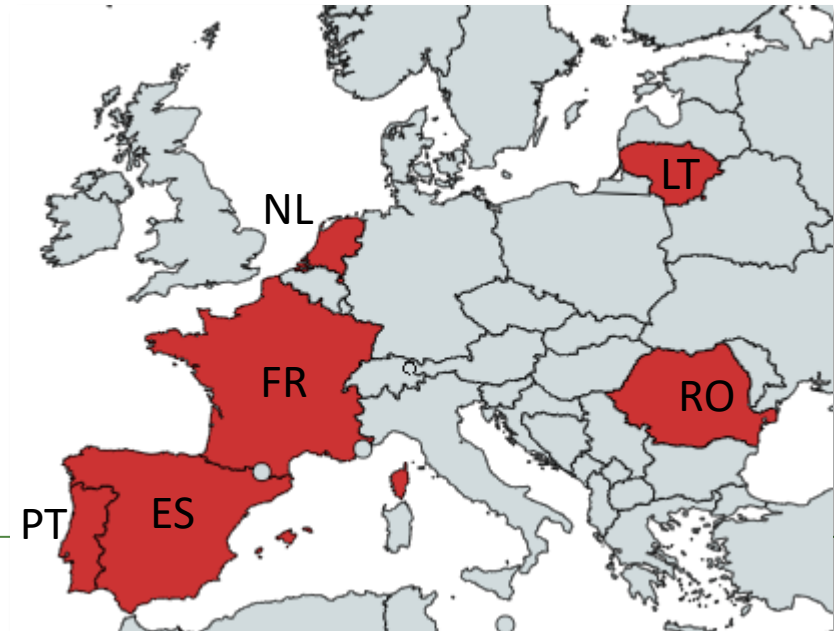
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► **EU, international and national policy inventory on coastal wetland restoration and conservation**

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

Policies addressing wetlands	Coastal wetlands explicitly mentioned
Nature/biodiversity policies	
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
Regional sea conventions	
Barcelona Convention	Y
Helsinki Convention/HELCOM Recommendation	N
OSPAR Convention/The North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030	Y
EU marine/coastal policies	
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
Climate policies	
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
Water management policies	
WFD	N
Floods Directive	N
EU Water Scarcity & Droughts Policy	N
Pollution/quality	
Groundwater Directive	N
Farm to Fork Strategy	N
Agriculture & soil policies	
CAP	N
EU Soil Strategy	N
Cross-cutting policies	
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**



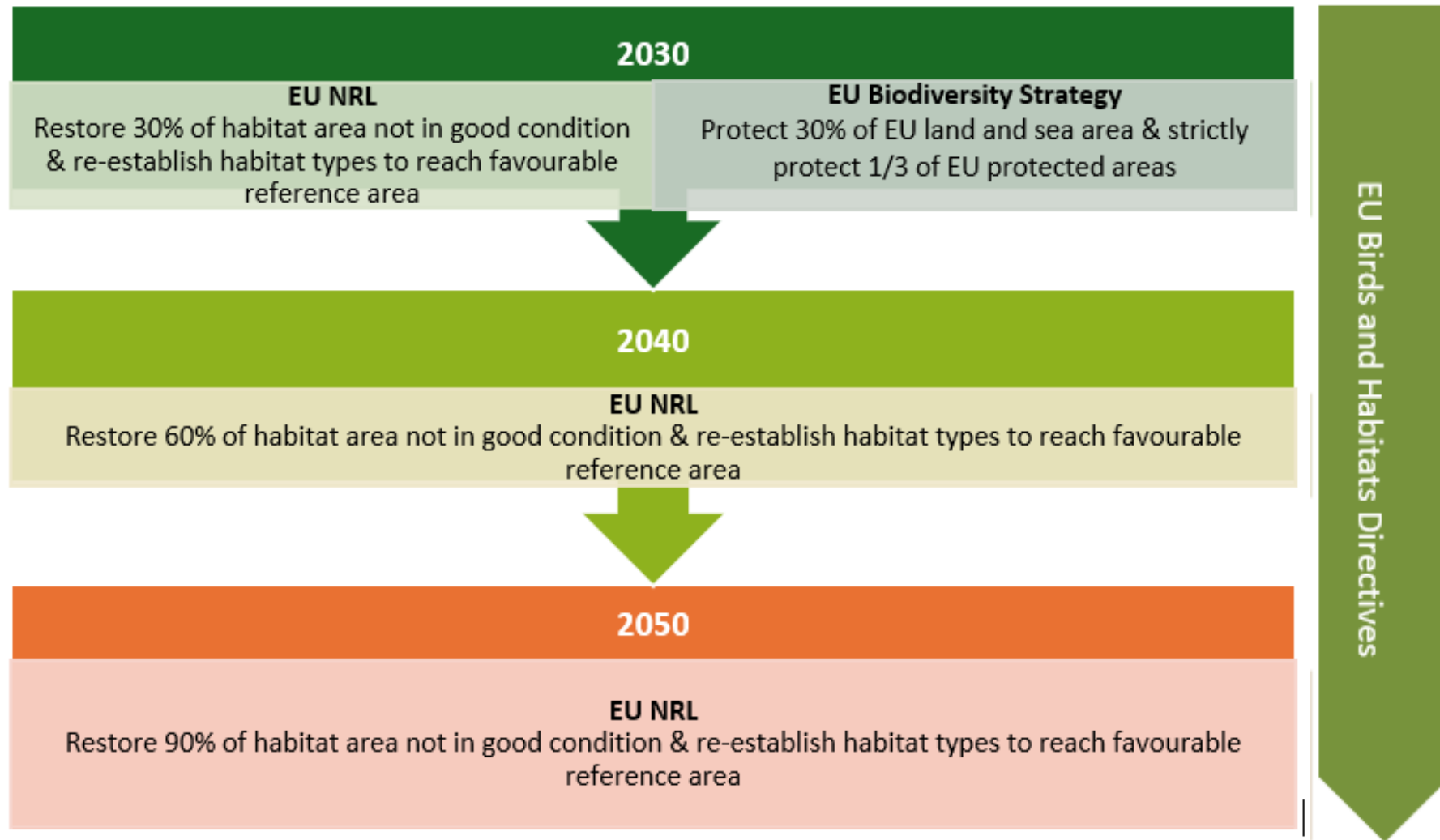
Policy definitions of coastal wetlands

- 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



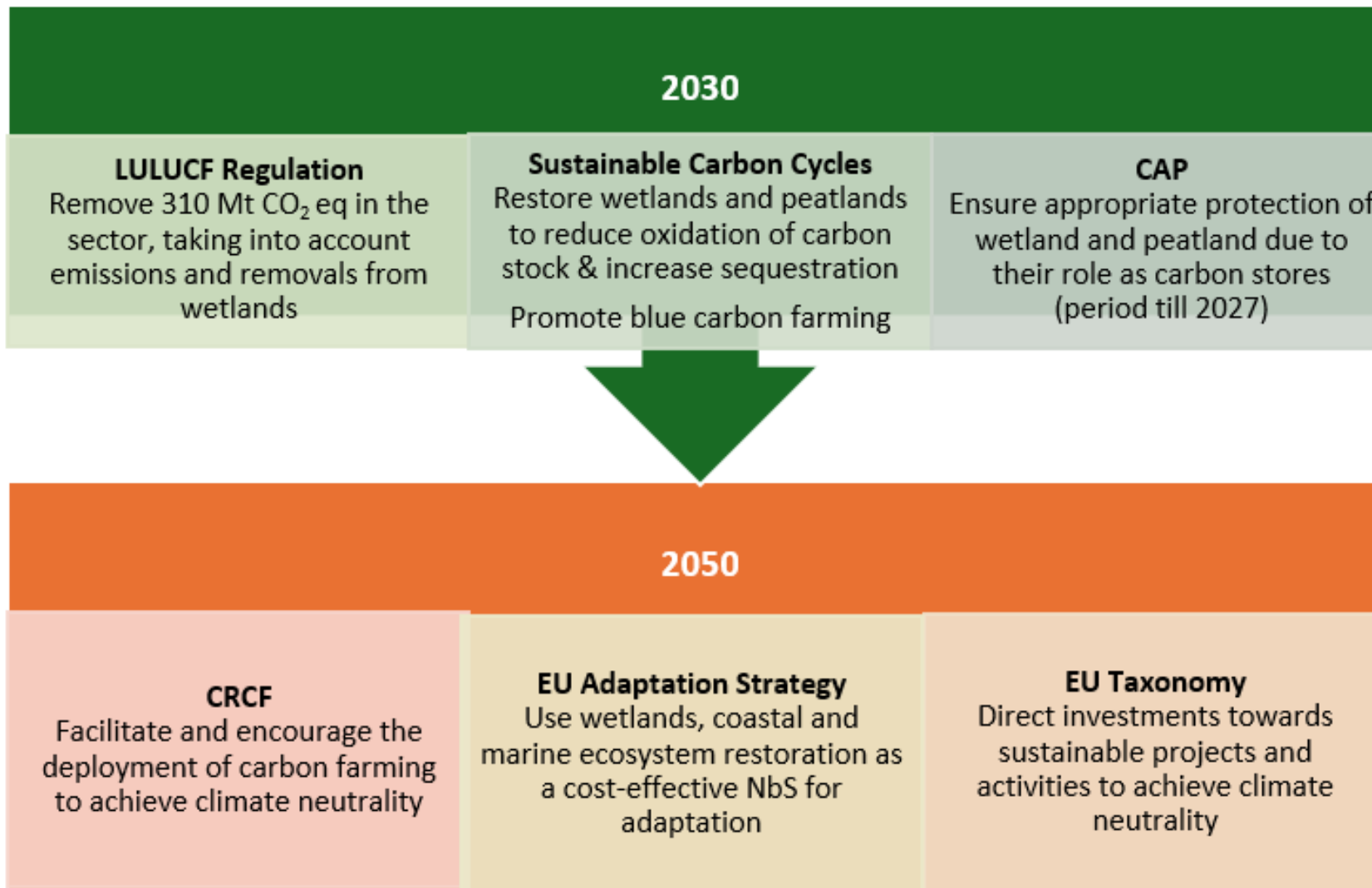


Key EU policy targets: Nature & Biodiversity



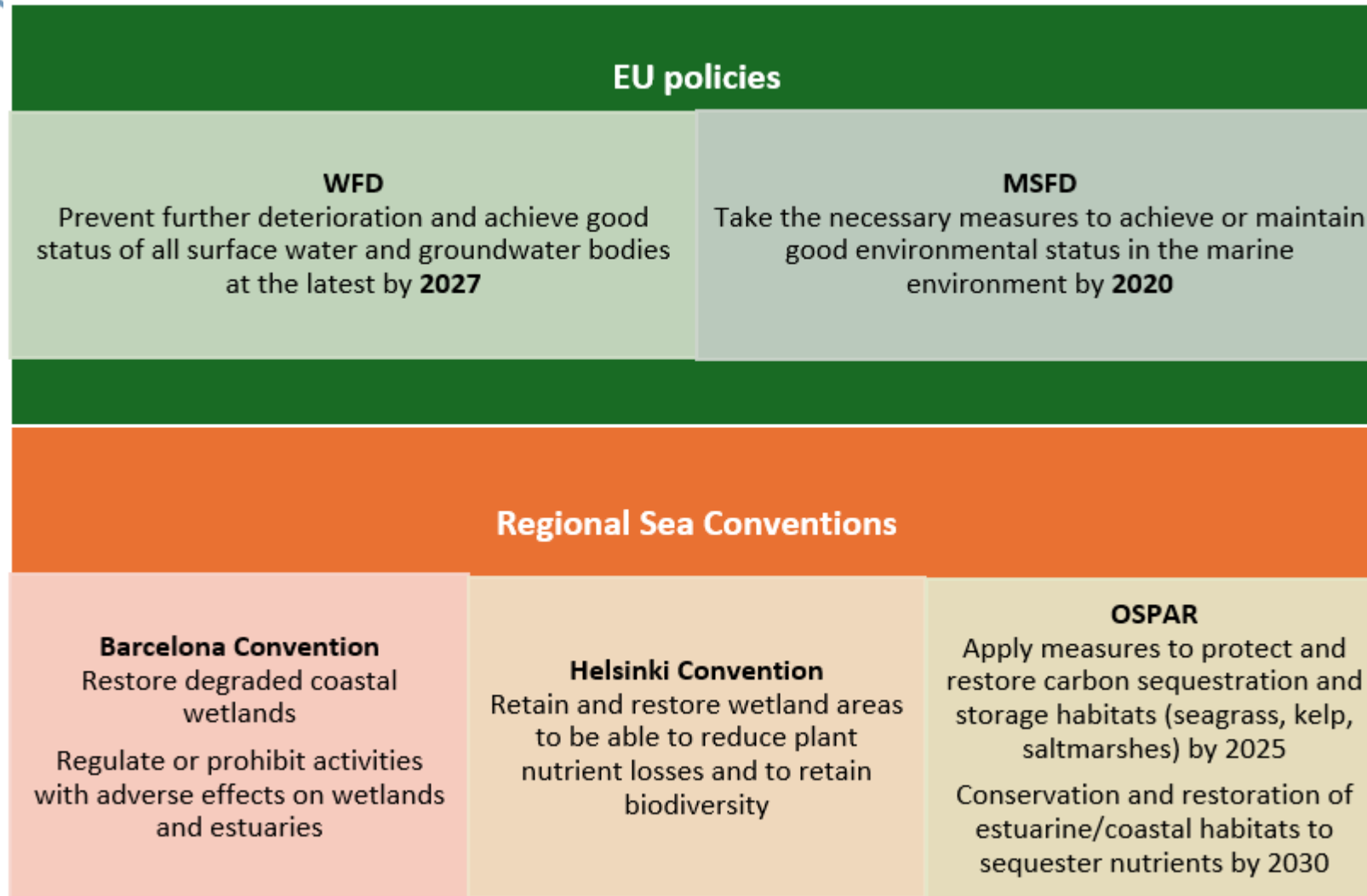


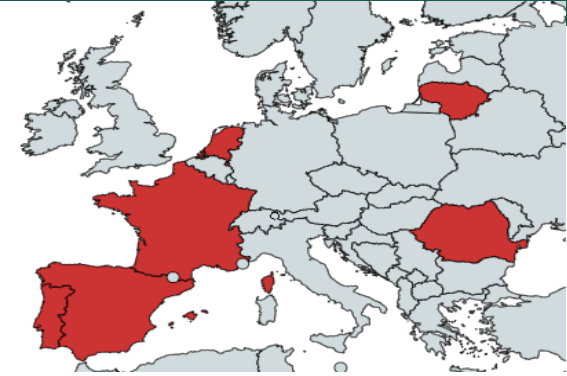
Key EU Policy Targets: Climate Mitigation & Adaptation





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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