Financing Natura 2000 through European Funding Instruments

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About CEEWEB

- CEE NGO Network
- Working groups
  - Agri-Environment
  - CITES
  - Sustainable Tourism
  - Natura 2000
- Global, Regional (EU level)
Basics Natura 2000

**Birds and Habitats Directives:** the cornerstone of the European Union’s legislation on biodiversity

**Natura 2000:** a coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation

- most **ambitious and large-scale** initiative ever undertaken to conserve nature across the EU
- **legally binding** (unlike some international conventions eg. CBD)
Currently covering ~18% EU terrestrial area (July 2007)
The network is composed of sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II. (EU 27, July 2007)

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<td>Birds</td>
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<td>Plant species</td>
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Role of CEEWEB in Natura 2000 designation

- **CEEWEB Natura 2000 WG (established 2002)**

  NGOs from CEE countries dealing with Natura 2000 designation and implementation at national level

- **Designation of the network**
  Biogeographic seminars are meetings in which the list of proposed Natura 2000 sites, proposed by national governments, are discussed and agreed by the participants of these meetings: the European Commission, representatives of national governments, NGOs, land users’ organisations and independent experts.

- As a Member of the European Habitats Forum CEEWEB was asked to coordinate NGO participation in Biogeographic seminars in new member states. (Currently BUL&ROM)

- NGO proposals have been taken on in many cases
Management of the network

• „Measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall be designed to maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest.” (Habitats Directive, Art.2)

• It is to the Member State to establish the most appropriate methods and instruments for implementing these provisions, taking into account economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics.
Management of Natura 2000 sites

• **great variety of activities are necessary** for the effective management of Natura 2000 sites (establishement of institutional and legal framework, capacity building and communication, management of sites, monitoring etc.)

• **positive measures are taken**, where necessary, to maintain and restore the habitats and species to a ‘favourable conservation state’

• **socioeconomic and other activities**, e.g. extensive agricultural practices may not only be permitted but actually required on Natura 2000 sites, (creating jobs and enhancing rural development)

• **EU co-financing needs potentially arise** in relation to all of these
Financing Natura 2000 – EU co-financing

- **Article 8 of the Habitats Directive**: recognition of the financial burden that Natura 2000 might place on Member States
- Commission estimation (2004): EUR 6.1 billion per year -EU 25 (most likely un underestimates)
Funding of Natura 2000 is integrated in existing financial instruments of the EU

- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD),
- Structural Funds (European Social Fund (ESF), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)),
- Cohesion Fund,
- European Fisheries Fund (EFF),
- Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE+),
- 7th Research Framework Programme (FP7).
What can these funds be used for?

- **WWF: EU Funding for Environment - A handbook for the 2007–13 programming period**
  
  Identifies funding possibilities for the environment in EU Funding regulations: „list of options” that are present in EU regulations
National programming

- actual availability of funds for the environment depending on national planning
- options need to be taken up in the relevant planning and programming documents (National development plans, Operational Programmes, Action plans etc.)
- documents checked and adopted by the Commission, but rather law influence!!!
- Time constraints: tenders have to be published, money has to be spent

- = High risk that the Commission’s proposed Natura 2000 financing policy will not deliver the necessary funds in practice because of the lack of compulsory elements in the proposed national financing regulations
Role of NGOs

• Important (but limited) role in shaping funding possibilities at national level
• Watchdog role: ensuring that options and provision provided by the EC are taken up at national level
• Lobby at EU level can be very helpful

• Environmental NGOs are only one of the many interest groups looking for EU money
Hungarian NGO lobby coalition for a better national EAFRD strategy (Example)

- Closely **following up the programming** at EU as well as at national level
- Look for the **most effective channel** of lobbying (media? Letter to the Commission? Make a deal with the ministry?)
- Cooperate with partners of similar interest (bio-farmers, animal-health groups etc)
- Constant pressure: weekly meetings with the MoA
What was achieved?

• Ministry of Agriculture regards NGOs as thoughtful partner (environmental NGOs were not invited to reconciliations earlier)
• Compensation payments for some Natura 2000 areas will start 2007
• Fund for Natura 2000 management plans
• Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is made for the national strategy plan for EAFRD

A substantive change of EAFRD strategy plan could not be achieved, but some minor changes were made and environmental concerns got more emphasis in several funds.
How much for Natura 2000?

✓ 200 000 € for management plans (2007-13)
✓ ~ 38 €/ha compensation for Natura grasslands
✓ not for arable land
✓ wetlands: later?
✓ Natura forest: from 2009 (40 €/ha)
Thank you for your attention!

Q&A
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