Principles of EU conservation policy – Natura 2000 site designation and management

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Introduction

European Ground Squirrel

IUCN Red List: Threatened (Vulnerable)

http://data.gbif.org/species/Spermophilus+citellus
Natura 2000 basics

European ecological network

- EU Habitats Directive
  - ca. 200 Habitat types
  - ca. 1000 Animal and plant species

- EU Birds Directive
  - ca. 200 Bird species

→ Listed in the Annexes of the EU Directives
NATURA 2000 NETWORK

Habitats Directive
Areas for Habitats and Species

National Site list
1995

Adoption by EU
1998

Adoption national level
2004

Birds Directive
Areas for Birds accession

NATURA 2000

www.ceeweb.org
Biogeographic Regions vs. Country Borders
Site Designation Criteria

• only scientific criteria for selection on the basis of existing data (no socio-economic considerations)

• proportion of Natura 2000 is proportional to the biodiversity of the country (more biodiversity, more Natura 2000)

• prediction (managability, natural processes…)

• + sites for connectivity
Site Designation Criteria

- Endemicity, degree isolation/fragmentation, trends
- Geographical distribution
- Priority status
- Importance at EU level
- Pressures, threats, vulnerability
- Restoration possibilities
Who designs Natura 2000?

- European Commission
- EU Member States
- NGO
The Management Objective

Favourable Conservation Status (FCS)

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.
Favourable Conservation Status (FCS)

Conservation Status of a habitat is favourable when:

• its **natural range** is stable or increasing, and
• the **specific structure and functions** which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist, and
• the conservation status of its **typical species** is favourable
How can FCS be achieved?

Preventive

AVOID DETERIORATION of sites (and proposed sites!)

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE for Plans and Projects

Proactive

MEASURES
- statutory
- administrative
- contractual
- management plans

... corresponding to the ecological requirements (FCS) of habitats and species present on the sites
Assessment Procedure

Certainty site's integrity will not be adversely affected?

- YES → Permission
- NO

Alternative solutions?

- YES → Alternative
- NO

Imperative reasons of overriding public interest?

- YES → Permission + compensation
- NO → Permission denied

Inform European Commission
Management through Integration

Integration at EU level
EU policy is to integrate nature conservation policy in other sectors (Cardiff process)

Most important integrations:
- Common Agricultural Policy (direct payments)
- Regional Development
- Water Framework Directive
- Common Fisheries Policy
Management through Integration - SLOVENIA

**WHAT & WHY?**
- Detailed conservation goals for each NATURA 2000 site

**HOW?**
- Conservation measures (+ investments, incentives)

**WHO?**
- Relevant sectors: Forestry, Agriculture, Water

**Operational Programme (2007-13)**

Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity

[www.ceeweb.org](http://www.ceeweb.org)
Thank you for your attention!
• Can the idea of Natura 2000 be exported to other continents?
• Is the idea of species and habitats-based designation a good concept? What are the limitations?
• How is the issue of connectivity tackled in other parts of the world?
• How to realise biodiversity friendly landuse in a scale that allows for connectivity/dispersal through the wider landscape? What kind of instruments are used for this around the world?