OBJECTIVES AND CONTENTS OF A NEW BIOGEOGRAPHICAL PROCESS

Gömörszölös, July 4, 2011

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Setting the scene

- Natura 2000 implementation is crucial to achieving the 2020 EU biodiversity target

- Important to take actions as stipulated by 2009 Article 17 report (only 17% of biogeographical level assessments are favourable)

- Important to increase actions and co-operation in order to provide real progress by 2020
Both the responsibility for designing and also implementing the necessary conservation measures to achieve FCS at the national level is exclusively with the individual Member States. The new process is not posing any further legal obligations.
The process is designed to improve the exchange of information about the measures taken and progress achieved at the biogeographical level.

It offers Member States a tool for agreeing on common priorities and coordinating measures should it be necessary.

It generates synergies and will lead to strengthening the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 sites.
EU added value of a new biogeographical process

- It provides help for setting priority conservation objectives at biogeographical level, creating a feedback mechanisms between individual management plans or similar instruments and conservation status of sites at the biogeographical levels.

- Helps to identify the most crucial conservation and restoration needs of threatened species and habitat types of Community interest at the biogeographical level.

- Helps to identify potential synergies and opportunities for cooperation.
Overall objectives of the process

- to strengthen cross-border cooperation
- to exchange information on conservation objectives and measures applied throughout the network
- to agree/recommend good practices in management/restoration and monitoring
- to agree/recommend adaptation of conservation objectives and measures to changing conditions; including climate change
- to promote coherence of the Natura 2000 network
- to contribute to the implementation and the updating of the future prioritised action
- framework of measures involving Community co-financing
Expected output of the process

- understanding on the feasibility and likely timeframes for recovery of species and habitats in response to particular targeted actions
- discussing constraints in the management of the Natura 2000 network (incl. conflicts, issues linked to public acceptance, …)
- catalysing cooperation between Member States, including cross-border cooperation in the management of Natura 2000 sites
Expected output of the process

- identifying species and habitats where good management of the Natura 2000 network will play a key role in achieving favourable conservation status; and, on the other hand, species and habitats for which improving their conservation status needs to be more widely addressed principally through sectoral policies such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries etc.

- defining priorities and recommending cost-effective ways to reach favourable conservation status and to deal with climate change impacts

- facilitating the exchange of information on conservation objectives and measures including best practice, on the follow-up of conservation measures and on the contribution of the Natura 2000 network to reach favourable conservation status (FCS)
Expected output of the process

- identifying potential synergies and benefits of management measures for Natura 2000 with other environmental and climate change objectives, recommending adaptation of wider sectoral policies where necessary in order to complement the conservation measures within the Natura 2000 network,

- providing for a permanent internet-based communication platform for the exchange of information on the management of Natura 2000.
What would it entail?

- The organisation of **regular seminars** chaired by the European Commission and involving representatives from the Member States, scientific experts and stakeholder observers from Member States covered by the respective biogeographical region.

- Meetings in each biogeographic region at regular intervals (e.g. every 3 years).

- COM will prepare documentation for the meeting with help of the EEA/ETC and other experts (“consortium”)
Possible organisation of the Seminars

- 3 days seminars
- Focusing on large clusters of species / habitats
- For example: One day meeting on forest habitats, one day meeting on agricultural habitats & one day meeting on marine, depending on preparatory scoping work
Main actors in the new biogeographical process

- Member States
- Commission, Contractor
- Expert networks
- Technical assistance contract
- EEA and ETC/BD
- NGOs
- Stakeholder organisations (users)
Some preparatory work for pilot seminar:

1. **On priority habitat types & species:** On the basis of Article 17 report: Identifying (agreeing on) habitat types and species in need of priority conservation objectives and measures in each biogeographical region.

2. **On expert networks:** Identifying existing expert networks in each biogeographical region for groups of habitat types or species (e.g. grasslands, dunes, freshwater habitats, etc.)
3. On best practice and recommendations: Contractor (experts) will make available information on best management practice per ‘priority’ species and habitat types + formulate recommendations on measures (compilation of information by contractor?)

4. On geographical network coherence and cooperation: Contractor (experts) will identify possible gaps in the network as well as needs/opportunities for cooperation between neighbouring Member States
Preparation for the Seminar

- Kick-off meeting with Commission
- 1 – 2 preparatory meetings with the Commission, the EEA-ETC/BD and Lead Member State / Seminar
- Regular meetings with the Commission (at maximum 15 regular meetings per year)
- Maximum 2 meetings of the expert group on Natura 2000 management in Brussels per year
- Maximum 3 meetings of the Coordination Group on Biodiversity and Nature or the Habitats Committee in Brussels per year;
- Maximum 2 meetings with the Seminar Steering Group (Commission, Lead Member State(s), EEA, ETC/BD) per seminar
- Maximum 6 ad hoc expert meetings in a Member State per year (3 per seminar)
- 2 preparatory workshops in Brussels or a Member State per year;
- 2 Natura 2000 Seminars in Brussels or a Member State per year
Possible actors

- Member States (Habitats Committee, CGBN, expert group on N2000 management)
- NGOs (Habitats Forum)
- Stakeholder organisations (Natura 2000 Forum)
Possible role for CEEweb

- Participation in the „consortium“
  - IUCN, EUROSITE, EURPARC, ALTERRA, CEEweb
  - Responsible for compilation of information in CEE countries (conservation status of species and habitat types, the major threats, existing management instruments and measures for, including best practice), making analysis, preparing recommendations (minor input to other activities)
  - National experts for collecting info in each MS

- Indirect assistance to NGOs
  - Participation in EHF
  - Preparation of NGO Toolkit
  - Further work on integration with BiDi Strategy, GI

- External Actor
  - Organisation of the complementary activities
  - Ensuring NGO participation on the Seminar
  - Lobby on MS and EU level (EHF)
  - Further linking to Strategy, EP