



Progress on Preparation for Natura 2000 in Future EU Member States



photo V. Stanová, Daphne

veronica



E L F



Nature Trust (Malta)



Synthesis and country reports for
Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia,
Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta,
Poland, Romania, Slovakia,
and Slovenia

January 2003



Enlargement Enriches the EU

Protecting the rich natural heritage of the new EU

The countries now in line to join the European Union bring with them a wealth of nature, including rich cultural landscapes and the last great wilderness areas on the European continent. The countries include the Carpathian Mountains, stretching across seven countries of the region and the last bastion of large carnivores, including bears, wolves, and lynx, on the European continent; the Danube Delta, one of the largest and most valuable wetland areas in the world; the Vistula River, the “Queen of Polish Rivers”, one of the only large rivers in Europe with major natural features; or the Baltic Coast, one of the most important corridors for migrant birds in Europe.

Extending the Natura 2000 network of conservation areas to the accession countries is a key step for ensuring that this rich natural heritage is treasured and preserved for all, both present and future generations of Europeans.

For more information on the environment and enlarge-

ment, see: www.panda.org/accession



Table of contents

I. Acknowledgements..... 2

II. Introduction 3

III. Synthesis of national reports..... 5

IV. Conclusions and recommendations..... 12

V. Contacts 14

VI. Useful links..... 17

Appendix: National reports..... 19



I. Acknowledgements

A large number of people and organizations from across Europe have cooperated to make this report possible.

Authors of national reports:

Bulgaria: Vesselina Kavrakova, WWF Danube Carpathian Programme, with support from Toma Belev, Vitosha Nature Park Directorate, and Valentina Fidanova and Simeon Marin of Green Balkans;

Czech Republic: Mojmir Vlasin, Veronica Ecological Institute (Czech Union for Nature Conservation – CSOP), with support from Tomas Ruzicka, Czech Environmental Partnership Foundation;

Estonia: Rein Kuresoo, Estonian Fund for Nature;

Hungary: Brigitta Bozsó, WWF Hungary, in close co-operation with Zsófia Tomcsányi and András Krolopp of CEEWEB as well as Andras Kovacs of MME - BirdLife Hungary;

Latvia: Ints Mednis, WWF Latvia;

Lithuania: Pranas Mierauskas and Edmundas Greimas, Lithuanian Fund for Nature;

Malta: Vincent Attard, Nature Trust Malta;

Poland: Inga Kolomyjska and Katarzyna Nowak, WWF Poland

2

Romania: Carmen Damian, Romanian Ministry of Water and Environmental Protection, and Sevas-tel Mircea, WWF Danube Carpathian Programme (Romanian Country Office);

Slovakia: Eva Viestová, Daphne Centre for Applied Ecology;

Slovenia: Hermann Sonntag, WWF Alpine Programme.

Synthesis and editing:

The synthesis report was drafted by Sandra Jen and Ellen Townsend, WWF European Policy Office, and edited by Andreas Beckmann, WWF Accession Initiative. Charlie Avis, WWF Danube-Carpathian programme, and Piotr Nieznanski, WWF Poland, also provided valuable comments.

This project was designed by the WWF Ecological Networks Team and co-ordinated by Sandra Jen and Andreas Beckmann.

Special thanks to Martin Schneekloth and Jennifer Prechtel for editing the national reports, as well as to David Burges, WWF UK, for his help with elaboration of the national questionnaires.

Publication of this report was made possible thanks in part to the generous support of WWF Austria.

Graphic layout and design: Michal Stransky (michal@sky.cz)

II. Introduction

In 1992, in response to the significant and ongoing deterioration of many habitat types and the growing number of threatened species, EU member states adopted the Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (CE/92/43), also known as the “Habitats Directive”. The Habitats Directive aims to contribute to the protection of biodiversity by establishing a European wide network of protected areas, called *Natura 2000*, as well as by protecting threatened species in their natural range. The legislation complements the 1979 Birds Directive, which establishes protected areas for threatened bird species.

WWF and its partners strongly support the implementation of the Habitats Directive and the establishment of Natura 2000, for the following reasons:

- The Habitats Directive represents a real attempt to conserve Europe’s biodiversity based on sound scientific evidence. Natura 2000 will not just be a collection of national or regional parks designated for a variety of reasons;
- The sites to be designated under Natura 2000 are intended to protect a representative sample of all Europe’s most threatened habitats and species, as listed in the annexes of the Directives;
- The Habitats Directive does not seek to rule out economic activities in Natura 2000 areas, but rather aims to promote sustainable activity in support of the conservation objectives for these areas.

The implementation of the Natura 2000 network of

nature conservation areas in the current 15 EU member states has been plagued by difficulties and delays. Lack of information and explanation at national and local levels concerning the implications of Natura 2000 have provoked opposition that has lead to blockages and delays at European level. Governments largely underestimated the scientific work required to gather the necessary data to propose a coherent list of sites for all the habitats and species listed in the Directive. Furthermore, there was reluctance to involve NGOs in the site selection process.

However, these difficulties should not detract from the tremendous progress that has already been achieved through the implementation of Natura 2000 to date. In the EU-15, although site selection is not yet complete, existing and proposed sites already represent some 18% of the Union’s territory (over 60 million hectares).



photo: T. Seragelyes/WWF HU



Natura 2000

and the future member states

In order to join the European Union, candidate countries must transpose the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives into their national legislation and prepare for the establishment of Natura 2000 on their territory. This includes submitting by the date of accession their lists of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) to the European Commission. The lists of pSCI will then be evaluated by the European Topic Centre for Nature Protection and Biodiversity (ETC/NPB) and through a moderation process for each biogeographic region (see map below).

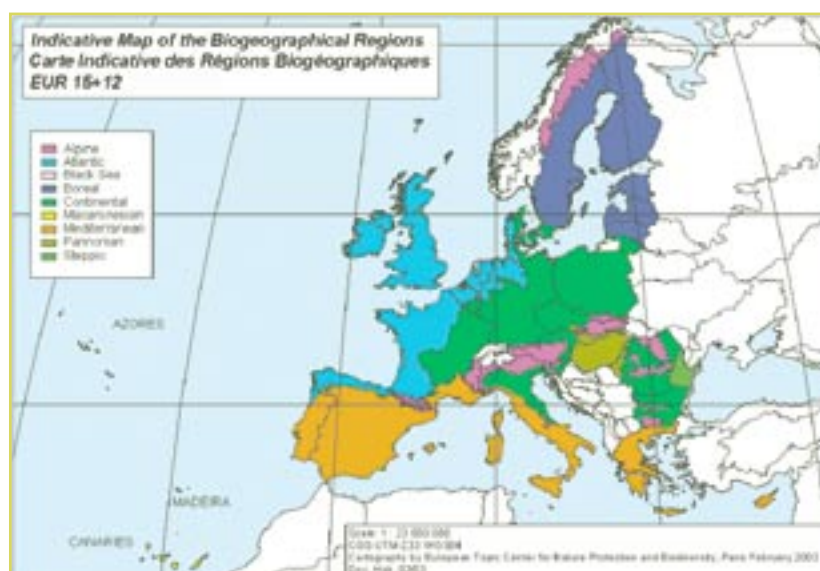
The extension of Natura 2000 to 12 additional countries is a new challenge. The countries that are now preparing to join the European Union have some of the most pristine landscapes and near-natural river systems on the European continent, including flourishing wildlife and a great variety of natural habitats – a natural wealth that will greatly enrich the European Union. Yet accession to the EU will also be accompanied by accelerating development pressures to such natural values, with for example the extension of the Trans-European Network for Transport (TENS-T) or the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Natura 2000 Progress Report

In the run-up to the historic enlargement of the European Union, the WWF Ecological Networks Team decided in the framework of the WWF Accession Initiative to build on its experience of working on Natura 2000 in the EU member states by undertaking together with five partner organisations an evaluation of ongoing preparations of the EU candidate countries for the implementation of the nature conservation network in the future EU member states (please see acknowledgements section above for a list of organisations that have been involved in this project).

The information provided in the national questionnaires is based on the experience of WWF staff and partner organisations who have been closely monitoring and, in most cases, actively involved in preparations for Natura 2000 in the different countries. The national reports and the synthesis presented below cover not only preparations of the lists of proposed Natura 2000 sites (pSCI's), but also touch on other important aspects including communications (education and awareness raising) as well as planning for future funding of the network in each country and integration in other land use policies.

We believe this synthesis and country reports provide a clear and concise snapshot of the progress that has been made to date in implementing the Habitats Directive across eleven future member states (Cyprus is not covered in this report). This first report is planned to be followed by up-dates in 2003/4.



III. Synthesis of National Reports

The national reports are set out in Section V of this report. This section provides a synthesis of the national reports according to seven headings:

- Timetable and approach to site selection
- Availability of scientific information
- Administrative and institutional capacity
- Involvement of NGOs in the preparatory work
- Ensuring adequate financial resources
- Legislative gaps
- Information and awareness raising

Section IV of the report outlines a series of recommendations for addressing the main shortcomings in the current preparations for the establishment of Natura 2000 in the future EU member states.



Timetable and approach

to site selection

Future member states have committed to submitting their lists of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI's) to the European Commission by their date of accession – i.e. May 1, 2004 for the first ten countries (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia), and possibly 2007 for Bulgaria and Romania.

Experience with implementing Natura 2000 in the existing EU member states underlines the importance of planning preparatory work on inventories, data collection, mapping, and the various consultations for the site selection process in order to avoid lengthy delays. The timely establishment of Natura 2000 has greatly suffered from a general lack of political will and commitment. This has resulted in considerable delays in starting the consultation process and undertaking the necessary research and inventories. It is absolutely vital that similar mistakes are not repeated and that adequate political support is provided for Natura 2000 at all levels, from national to local.

The approach to the site selection process in terms of administrative organisation, information of stakeholders and consultations of NGOs varies from country to country. In Lithuania, a preliminary list of pSCI's was completed in September 2001 and consultations have begun with stakeholders concerning the designation of Natura 2000 sites in areas, which are not already protected under national legislation. In Slovakia and the Czech Republic, the preparatory work for site selection is also very well advanced, with a complete overview of all the scientific data that is available and mapping well underway. Also in Malta, detailed ecological surveys have been completed for the whole island and complementary surveys are now in progress.

In other countries, however, it seems that there is a common tendency to limit or at least focus for the moment identification of potential sites to areas that already have a protected status. In Latvia, for example, the list of pSCI's has been prepared on the basis of the existing protected areas with no ecological reference made to the country as a whole. The same applies for Estonia, where site identification is similarly limited to protected areas. This policy is not in line with the objectives and criteria of the Habitats Directive and will only require subsequent revision. Shortcomings in approaches to site selection is also in some cases due to limitations in financial and human resources. This hinders the possibilities to do complementary surveys or to update information. In Bulgaria, the site selection process is intended to start soon. As the above-mentioned cases and others show, there is reason for concern that the selection process will focus narrowly on existing protected areas or on sites already identified under the CORINE Biotopes Programme.

Availability of scientific information

Selection of sites to be protected as part of the Natura 2000 network should be based on strictly scientific criteria, the application of which requires information on the distribution of the habitat types and species listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. The country reports show significant gaps in the information available for all countries except the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Malta. In Slovakia, all existing databases of species and habitats have been reviewed, and the mapping of different habitat types and species is very well advanced. More effort is required particularly in larger countries like Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. In Romania and Bulgaria, the lack of scientific information is seen as the main constraint that needs to be overcome.

Authorities in some countries are taking encouraging steps to address these problems. In Romania, the Ministry of Environment is financing inventory studies from its own budget as well as through external funding sources. The Lithuanian government has drawn on funding from the Danish aid programme DANCEE (Danish Cooperation for Environment in Eastern Europe) to support field surveys and fill data gaps. Data is also being collected and supplied by some Lithuanian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as Protected Area administrations. In Estonia, although there are satisfactory inventories for most land-based habitats, there are gaps in knowledge particularly regarding marine habitats. In neighbouring Latvia, full inventories are being conducted of existing protected areas; the work will still need to be extended beyond these areas to include natural values that are eligible for Natura 2000 but not currently protected. Gaps in scientific information will also have to be addressed for forest habitat types as well as bogs.

In Bulgaria, there are high expectations that a Natura 2000 project funded by DANCEE will address existing gaps in scientific information. However, the initial budget foreseen for the project has been cut by two-thirds and its implementation time has also been seriously reduced. In Slovenia, on-going inventory work suffers from a lack of human resources.

Generally, more human and financial resources are needed for carrying out inventories, mapping and analysis work to identify all potential Natura 2000 sites. WWF and its partners call on national governments to recognise the importance of Natura 2000 and secure the resources necessary for its establishment.

Administrative and Institutional Capacity

Ensuring successful establishment of Natura 2000 requires careful administrative preparation at different levels of government administration. All national reports have identified the need to build up and strengthen capacity of the institutions in charge of the Natura 2000 process. Slovakia seems to be the only country where, with the establishment of the State Nature Conservancy, financial and human resources have significantly increased over the last two years.



While data gathering and site identification can be adequately handled at local or regional levels (regions, voivodship or county), experience has shown that it is essential to have efficient national co-ordination of the process. A national co-ordination body has been established in several countries. For example, in Romania a national Working Committee has been established within the framework of the Emerald project. In Poland, the work of the different Voivodships is co-ordinated by the National Foundation for Environmental Protection. In Bulgaria, the EU approximation project, *Conservation of Habitats and Species*, supported by DANCEE, will set up a National Scientific Working Group as well as a Supervisory Council including representatives from the state, scientific institutions, local authorities and NGOs.

One of the tasks of the national co-ordination unit should be to ensure that the criteria for site selection are applied across the country in a coherent manner and without local or regional disparities. Discrepancies could result in a particular interpretation of the criteria, or lead to local misunderstandings. In Estonia, for example, coverage of Natura 2000 sites varies from county to county and strongly reflects the level of understanding of local conservation experts. Political pressure can also influence site selection.

Transfer of expertise, exchange of best practice and experience from EU countries and between the future member states is a good way of helping the administrations to handle the process in the best possible way. The country reports highlight examples such as a Twinning project that is planned between the Polish Ministry of Environment and the administration of the French Regional Parks. In another Twinning project, Spanish and Finnish conservation experts and staff from respective environmental ministries are providing support to their Hungarian colleagues who are working on Natura 2000.

Involvement of NGOs in the preparatory work

Experience gathered in the existing EU member states and elsewhere suggests that nature conservation demands the participation and active involvement of a wide range of actors. In the accession countries, many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have a very well developed scientific capacity, expertise and knowledge.

However, whilst in some countries such as Lithuania, Slovakia and Romania NGOs and scientific experts have been invited to consultations on selection of potential sites and preparation of legislation, in other countries, e.g. Hungary, consultation with NGOs has been limited. In Poland, the Natura 2000 working groups which have been established in each voivodship include one NGO representative. It should however be noted that the actual consideration that is given to input made by the NGOs varies considerably from one Voivodship to another.

In Estonia, it appears that NGOs are not being equally engaged. This risks side-lining readily available expertise and data. In the Czech Republic, NGO involvement was initially quite limited, but is now growing. Latvian NGOs are involved in a field survey and the results are disseminated through seminars. Slovenian NGOs are less engaged in site identification in their country, but should be more closely involved in evaluation of the draft proposal.

A very positive example can be found in Bulgaria, where the Ministry of Environment and Water involved NGOs in preparations for the Act on Biodiversity, which was recently adopted. However, though the Act on Biodiversity provides for the establishment of a National Biodiversity Council, the procedure for including NGO representatives is neither democratic nor transparent.

There are a number of regional initiatives – many of them facilitated by NGOs – which offer much in the way of useful information for the Natura 2000 process. Initiatives like the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative or the Large Carnivore Initiative have collected, processed, and analysed biodiversity data concerning species distributions, habitats, priority areas for conservation and wildlife corridors. Often, this information is available in readily usable formats such as GIS and databases. Despite the relevance of such information at ecoregion (or biogeographical) level, it is rarely taken into account by national authorities.

In the interest of implementing Natura 2000 effectively and avoiding many of the problems that have plagued existing member states, WWF and its partner organisations call on national authorities to work in close co-operation with NGOs for the identification of Natura 2000 sites as well as subsequent implementation.

Ensuring adequate financial support

The financial burden connected with the management of Natura 2000 sites is recognised in Article 8 of the Habitats Directive. This article provides for possible EU co-funding for certain conservation measures targetted at priority habitats and species. Furthermore, the European Commission's Working Group on Financing Natura 2000 has addressed financial issues related to the establishment of Natura 2000 in a broader scope, looking at all the types of costs and the various possibilities for EU co-financing through existing programmes and budgets. There is a provision for member states to receive funding to help cover some of the management costs, from, for example, the LIFE instrument, the Structural and Cohesion Funds as well as funding from the Rural Development 'pillar' of the Common Agricultural Policy.

In the period preceding the candidate countries' formal accession to the European Union, some preparatory work for Natura 2000 can be financed through LIFE (in those countries that are currently participating in the programme) as well as PHARE (e.g. through the Access NGO support programme). The other pre-accession funds, ISPA and SAPARD, currently do not include Natura 2000 in their target settings.

Costs related to preparing for and implementing the Natura 2000 network range from inventories and surveys for site identification to compensatory measures for certain sites as well as support needed for actual site management. Estimates from the European Commission Working Group on Financing Natura 2000 suggest that the costs associated with the management of Natura 2000 in current EU countries is between 3.5 and 5.7 billion € per year, based on average management costs of 80 € per hectare per year (various cost estimates give range of 20 to 500 €/ha/yr). While the Working Group has clearly identified the needs for EU co-financing for Natura 2000 management, it has not addressed the situation and specific needs of the Future EU member states.

In order to ensure a successful and smooth implementation of Natura 2000, it is essential to address these questions related to financing as early as possible. WWF and its partners call on future member states to address the financial implications of Natura 2000 and to submit to the European Commission their estimated costs and needs. In Slovakia, in the framework of the "Approximation Strategy for EU Environmental Legislation", the budget for the implementation of Natura 2000 has been estimated at approximately 3,69 million € per year. The estimated cost in the Czech Republic is 150 million Kc per year.

Current financial needs for Natura 2000 preparatory work have been met in different ways. The Danish Cooperation for Environment in Eastern Europe (DANCEE) has been a very important source of financial support for many countries, though the amount available has been cut significantly. In Slovakia, DANCEE funds have been allocated to a project on protection and sustainable use of peatlands. In Lithuania, DANCEE has supported a project on the implementation of Natura 2000 at local and regional level. DANCEE projects are also planned in Estonia. In Bulgaria the ca. 525 000 € EU approximation project *Conservation of Habitats and Species* supported by DANCEE began in December 2002. Other sources of external funding include the Council of Ministries of Nordic Countries, which has provided support to Estonia for preparation of a manual on Natura 2000 habitats; Dutch government support through the Matra programme, provided to Slovakia for key elements of the preparatory work such as the evaluation of data bases, the preparation of methodology for site selection, preparation and publication of an interpretation manual for habitat types as well as several awareness raising activities. In the Czech Republic, the British Department for International Development (DfID) has supported a project focused on awareness raising and capacity building on Natura 2000 in a selection of Protected Landscape Areas.

As mentioned above, some PHARE pre-accession funds are available to support preparations for Natura 2000. The Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (the Bulgarian partner of BirdLife International) has carried out a PHARE ACCESS communications project to prepare authorities and the general public for the establishment of the Natura 2000 network in that country. ACCESS-financed projects are also being undertaken in the Czech Republic to raise awareness of Natura 2000 among NGOs, regional authorities, special interest groups, and local communities in selected areas. In Lithuania, PHARE support will be used to prepare management plans for Natura 2000 areas.

LIFE Nature III is currently the only dedicated Community level financial instrument for implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directive. All countries are part of the EU's LIFE programme apart from Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia and the Czech Republic.

WWF and its partner organisations call on future member states to build on the work of the European Commission's Working Group on Financing Natura 2000 to address the financial implications of Natura 2000 and to submit to the European Commission their estimated costs and needs for EU co-financing. Furthermore, we call on the European Commission to provide additional financial support from the EU for the extension of the Natura 2000 network to the 12 future member states.

Threats to Natura 2000 sites and integration in sectoral policies

All countries report threats to potential Natura 2000 sites. These threats range from conventional timber logging in Lithuania to planned construction of the Via Baltica motorway through the Biebrza National Park in Poland. In Latvia and Estonia, the multiplication of small hydropower stations threatens to disturb river basin management and thus threaten protected species and important habitats. In Slovakia and the Czech Republic, projects related to the development of the planned Danube-Oder-Elbe canal and the construction of two bridges at Hohenau-Moravsky Jan and at Marchegg threatens the Morava River floodplains.

In Poland, the plans to build the Danube-Odra-Elbe canal and the Oder 2006 investment plan (a plan for further river regulation starting with construction of the Malczyce dam, which is planned as part of a future dam cascade along the river) will threaten some twenty-six potential Natura 2000 sites on the Polish side of the river and another two sites within the Czech Republic. The Odra 2006 investment plan is expected to be financed from the Polish national budget as well as through EU support, e.g. through the ISPA pre-accession fund.

Some of the planned large infrastructure projects which rely on EU funding also threaten potential Natura 2000 sites. These include the Struma motorway, part of European Transport Corridor No. 4, through the Kresna Gorge in Bulgaria; the M3 Motorway project via the Szatmar-Bereg Landscape Protection Area in Hungary; the D8 motorway that is being built across the Czech Middle Mountains, and that should be extended with EU support across the Giant Mountains to Saxony; the Wloclawek dam along the Vistula river in Poland; the construction of inland waterway ports and bridges along the Morava river in Slovakia; and a proposed bridge across the potential Väinameri Natura 2000 site in Estonia.

It is essential that the European Commission ensures close co-ordination and supervision of the EU Pre-Accession funds (ISPA, SAPARD, PHARE) and the application of EU environmental legislation. Plans for the Trans-European Network for Transportation (TENS-T) and its extension to the accession countries, and any future revisions to this network, should be subjected to Strategic Environmental Assessment. This process should be co-ordinated by the European Commission and undertaken with special regard to potential Natura 2000 sites in the candidate countries. In addition, the ISPA instruments should be used to fund preparatory studies and technical assistance to develop ecologically compatible transportation infrastructure that respects potential Natura 2000 sites. The European Commission should encourage the candidate countries along the Danube to make use of this possibility.



Legislative gaps

We call on national governments to ensure that all decisions on spatial planning comply with the EU's environmental *acquis*. These provisions include specific obligations within the Directives on environmental impact assessment, access to environmental information, water protection as well as river basin management and nature conservation, in addition to obligations under relevant national legislation and regional conventions.

The European Commission has clearly stated on numerous occasions that pre-accession funding, for example for infrastructure development, transportation and communications, must be made conditional on respecting the requirements of the EU Environmental Impact Assessment Directive as well as the Habitats and Birds Directives, particularly the conservation of potential Natura 2000 sites. To ensure that this is effectively applied in practice we emphasise the importance of effective co-ordination at European, national and local levels between authorities in charge of nature protection and those responsible for infrastructure development and other land use policy.

The challenge is to guide new developments and shape future patterns of investment and land-use in a way that uses and profits from natural capital without undermining or destroying it. Enlargement offers the European Union an opportunity to put its paper commitments to sustainable development into actual practice.

All countries have adopted new legislation to transpose the provisions of the Birds and Habitats Directives into their national legislation. However, certain problems and insufficiencies have been identified. In Lithuania, articles 6.3 and 6.4 have not been properly transposed. Authorities plan to address this problem by amending legislation on Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA's) in April 2003. In Slovakia, there are some discrepancies between the Act on Nature and Landscape Protection and the Act on Forests. In other countries like Bulgaria there is still a lack of information about the quality and efficiency of the transposition legislation.

More generally, it seems that the provisions for the establishment and management of Natura 2000 are very poorly reflected in land use planning policies and sectoral legislation. Moreover, the level of awareness of EU nature conservation policy seems to be very low in Ministries with responsibility for policies that may have a negative impact on the network such as the Ministries of Agriculture, Regional Development or Transportation. The examples presented above highlight some of the more outstanding consequences of this situation.

WWF and its partner organisations call on national authorities and the European Commission to ensure tight monitoring of compliance with the EU environmental *acquis* and national legislation. Further assistance and advice should be provided to local and regional authorities to ensure an effective and timely implementation of the new legislation. The expertise of the EU Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL) should be called upon for this purpose.



photo M. Dépraz/WWF-Canon

Information and awareness raising

The experience of existing EU member states has shown the importance of beginning as early as possible to raise awareness and inform relevant stakeholders of Natura 2000 and its various implications. All EU and future member states have endorsed the so-called “El Teide declaration” of June 2002, *Natura 2000: a Partnership for Nature*. At a time when the EU-15 are moving toward final designation of Natura 2000 areas and looking forward to the extension of the network to future member states, the signatories recognised that a new impulse was needed for the implementation of Natura 2000. The signatories committed to promoting awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 as well as the development of partnerships involving a broad range of stakeholders in the management of Natura 2000 sites.

Furthermore, realising the importance of communications for the successful implementation of Natura 2000, the European Commission established in January 2002 a working group on “Communicating Natura 2000”. One of the objectives of this group is to draft a proposal for a Charter to be used on voluntary basis at local level. The Charter would consist of a set of principles and commitments to establish an Action Plan around Natura 2000 sites. This should be a very useful tool to facilitate the site designation process in the future member states and avoid some of the mistakes made in the EU-15. It is however necessary to broaden the participation in this group to include representatives from future member states in order to ensure that relevant inputs are provided now rather than later.

All reports stress the importance of raising the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic, and civil society stakeholders and among public authorities at national and local levels. Initiatives have been taken in all countries to start explaining what is Natura 2000 and its implications. Sometimes these are NGO activities, which often tend to be underfunded or neglected by national authorities. In Slovakia, three national conferences have been organised by the Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology, but the level of information is still considered as insufficient. Posters and brochures have been produced in Estonia and a web page on Natura 2000 is hosted by the Ministry of Environment, yet this still appears insufficient.

The Latvian and Estonian reports underline the need to give information to private landowners about the implications of Natura 2000 and designation process, since most of the new sites will be located on private land. Close consultation with key sectors like forest owners is also crucial to avoid an increase in opposition to the network. Processes for conflict resolution should be in place to deal with opposition when it arises. In Bulgaria, the level of understanding and knowledge about Natura 2000 is still very limited even among experts from the relevant authorities. The general public is hardly informed about the network and the changes and possible benefits arising from its establishment. The DANCEE supported project foresees to partially fill in this gap, but much greater efforts will still be needed.



IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

Thorough preparation for the establishment of Natura 2000 in future EU member states is crucial to ensure that the network is extended in a coherent way and that Europe's most threatened habitats and species are given effective protection. The extent of this task must not be underestimated.

On the basis of the national reports contained in this document, WWF and its partners conclude and recommend that:

- Additional resources are needed for completing the scientific work to ensure that all potential Natura 2000 sites can be identified. Additional funding should be made available through PHARE as well as ISPA and SAPARD pre-accession funds.
- It is essential that the areas designated form an ecologically coherent network, rather than a patchwork of already protected areas. WWF and its partners call on national authorities to take into account all the areas that fulfill the Habitats Directive criteria, including corridors, buffer zones and stepping stones, and not to limit the identification work to already protected areas.
- Administrative and institutional capacity must be strengthened to ensure that the whole Natura 2000 process can be handled as an opportunity for promoting nature conservation and sustainable rural and regional development. To achieve this aim, efforts for the implementation of Natura 2000 must not be limited to the Ministry of Environment but must be brought to the attention of all other relevant ministries and institutions.
- National authorities should work in closer partnership with NGOs for the identification of the Natura 2000 sites and subsequent implementation.
- Support should be made available to ensure the transfer of relevant expertise and best practice from EU countries and, especially, between the future member states, particularly when considering biogeographical scales, such as the Carpathian mountains, which include the territory of several different countries.
- Candidate countries should submit to the European Commission their estimated costs and needs for EU co-financing. Additional EU financial support will be needed for the extension of the Natura 2000 network to the future member states.
- National authorities and the European Commission must ensure that no funds are allocated to infrastructure and other projects which endanger present or future Natura 2000 sites. Many potential Natura 2000 sites are already under threat. National governments must ensure that all decisions on spatial planning comply with the EU's environmental *acquis*. In addition to the requirements set out by articles 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive, compliance with the obligations concerning environmental impact assessment, access to environmental information, water protection as well as river basin management is essential to ensure that new developments and land use planning is done in a way that uses and profits from natural capital without undermining or destroying it.

▪ Substantially greater efforts are needed to raise awareness and understanding of Natura 2000, including the implications it will have for land and resource use as well as the benefits and opportunities it can yield. Awareness raising and education is especially urgent among relevant authorities at national and regional levels; special interest groups such as farmers, landowners, and hunters; as well as NGOs, who can provide vital support for implementation of the conservation network. The European Commission should broaden participation in the Natura 2000 Communication Working Group to include representatives of the candidate countries as well as provide specific funding to support communication activities on Natura 2000 in these countries. At national level, we call on national and regional authorities to increase their efforts to inform the various stakeholders about Natura 2000, the process for its implementation and opportunities it can yield.



V. Contacts

Bulgaria

WWF Danube Carpathian Programme

Vesselina Kavrakova
Bulgarian Projects Officer
67 Tzanko Tzerkovski Str.
1421 Sofia, Bulgaria
tel./fax: +359 2 9640545
kavrakova@internet-bg.net

Czech Republic

Veronica Ecological Institute

Dr Mojmír Vlašín
Panská 9
602 00 Brno, Czech Republic
tel.: +420 542 218 351
fax: +420 542 210 561
mojmir.vlasin@een.cz
www.veronica.cz

Estonia

Estonian Fund for Nature

Rein Kuresoo, Natura 2000
Robert Oetjen, Director
Riia 185A, Tartu, Estonia
P.O. Box: Pk 245, Tartu 50002, Estonia
tel.: +372 7 428 443
fax: +372 7 428 166
elf@elfond.ee
www.elfond.ee

Hungary

WWF Hungary

Brigitta Bozsó, Natura 2000 Officer
Németvölgyi út 78/b
1124 Budapest, Hungary
tel.: +36 1 214 55 54
fax: +36 1 212 93 53
brigitta.bozso@wwf.hu
www.wwf.hu

Latvia

WWF Latvia

Ints Mednis
Elizabetes Str. 8-4
1010 Riga, Latvia
tel.: +371 7 505 640
fax: +371 7 505 651
imednis@wwf.org.lv
www.wwf.lv

Lithuania

Lithuanian Fund for Nature

Dr Pranas Mierauskas, Executive Director
Klaipedos Street 5-16
2001 Vilnius, Lithuania
tel./fax.: +370 5 2625152
info@glis.lt
pranas.m@glis.lt
www.glis.lt

Malta

Nature Trust (Malta)

Vincent Attard
P.O. Box 9, Valletta CMR 01, Malta
tel./fax +356 21 248 558
info@naturetrustmalta.org
www.naturetrustmalta.org

Poland

WWF Poland

Katarzyna Nowak, Natura 2000 Officer
knowak@wwf.pl
Inga Kolomyjska, EU Accession Officer
ikolomyjska@wwf.pl
ul. Wisniowa 38
02-520 Warszawa, Poland
tel.: +48 22 849 84 69
fax: +48 22 646 36 72
www.wwf.pl

Romania

WWF Danube Carpathian Programme

Sevastel Mircea, Project Manager Romania
61, Bvd Marasti
Sector 1, Cod 71331 Bucharest, Romania
tel.: +40 21 2242576/329
admircea@pcnet.ro

Slovakia

DAPHNE – Institute of Applied Ecology

Eva Viestová, Natura 2000 Officer
Hanulova 5/D
844 40 Bratislava, Slovakia
tel./fax: +421 7 654 121 33
viestova@changenet.sk
www.daphne.sk

Slovenia

WWF Alpine Programme

Hermann Sonntag, Nature Conservation Officer
c/o WWF-Austria/Tirol
Brixner Str. 4/Top 9
A-6020 Innsbruck, Austria
tel.: +43 512 573534-0
hermann.sonntag@tirol.wwf.at



General

WWF EU Accession Coordinator

Andreas Beckmann
c/o WWF Austria
Ottakringerstr. 114-116
A-1160 Wien, Austria
tel.: +43 1 48817-238
mobile: +43 676 83488/238
fax: +43 1 48817-277
andreas.beckmann@wwf.at
www.panda.org/accession

WWF Ecological Networks Policy Officer

Sandra Jen
WWF European Policy Office
36 avenue de Tervuren Box 12
1040 Brussels, Belgium
tel.: +32 2 743-8813
fax: +32 2 743-8819
sjen@wwfepo.org
www.panda.org/epo

WWF Accession Policy Officer

Ellen Townsend
WWF European Policy Office
36 avenue de Tervuren Box 12
1040 Brussels, Belgium
tel.: +32 2 740-0921
fax: +32 2 743-8819
etownsend@wwfepo.org
www.panda.org/accession

WWF Danube Carpathian Programme (WWF DCP)

Mariahilferstrasse 88 a/3/9
A-1070 Vienna Austria
tel.: +43 1 5245470
fax: +43 1 5245470-70
office@wwfdcp.org
www.carpathians.org

Charlie Avis, WWF DCP Policy Officer
c/o WWF Hungary
1124 Budapest
Nemetvolgyi ut 78/b, Hungary
tel.: +36 30 250 5869
cavis@wwfdcp.org

BirdLife International

Zoltan Waliczky, Accession co-ordinator
c/o RSPB, The Lodge
Sandy, Bedfordshire
SG19 2DL, UK
tel.: +44 1767 680551
fax: +44 1767 683211
zoltan.waliczky@rspb.org.uk

CEEWEB Policy Office

Annamária Csóka, EU-Enlargement coordinator
csoka@ceeweb.org
Zsófia Tomcsányi, Natura 2000 coordinator
tomcsanyi@ceeweb.org
Ulloi ut 91/B
1091 Budapest, Hungary
tel./fax: +36 1 217 0803.
www.ceeweb.org

VI. Useful links on Natura 2000 and the accession countries

General Links

European Commission – Natura 2000:

europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/themes.htm
europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/natura.htm

**European Topic Centre on Nature Protection
and Biodiversity:**

nature.eionet.eu.int/

European Environment Agency:

www.eea.eu.int

**European Community Biodiversity clearing house
– portal to information relevant to the Convention
on Biodiversity:**

biodiversity-chm.eea.eu.int

NGOs

WWF Accession Initiative:

www.panda.org/accession

**European Centre for Nature Conservation
– “Establishing Natura 2000 in EU Accession
Countries”**

www.ecnc.nl/doc/ecnc/publicat/natu2000.html

**The Central and East European Working Group
for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB):**

www.ceeweb.org/

BirdLife International:

www.birdlife.org

European Environmental Bureau (EEB):

www.eeb.org

The World Conservation Union IUCN:

www.iucn.org

Environment in the accession countries

Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe (LCIE):

large-carnivores-lcie.org/

Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative:

www.carpathians.org

**Baltic States’ Regional Preparation for Natura
2000 (BANAT):**

www.bef.lv/nature/index.htm

Baltic Sea region:

www.helcom.fi/environment.html

Baltic Sea Environment Home Page:

www.envir.ee/baltics/

Danube Environmental Forum:

www.de-forum.org/

Danube River:

archive.panda.org/livingwaters/danube/index.cfm

Accession Countries

Bulgaria

Ministry of Environment:
www.moew.government.bg/
Green Balkans (NGO):
www.greenbalkans.org

Czech Republic

Natura 2000 website:
www.natura2000.cz
Ministry of the Environment:
www.env.cz/
Czech Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection:
www.nature.cz/

Estonia

Estonian Ministry of the Environment:
www.envir.ee
Estonian Environment Information Centre:
www.envir.ee/itk
Estonian Fund for Nature:
www.elfond.ee

Hungary

Ministry of Environment and Water:
www.ktm.hu/index_uk.htm
Hungarian National Parks:
www.madartavlat.hu/sajle.htm
WWF Hungary:
www.wwf.hu

Latvia

Latvian Environment Agency:
www.lva.gov.lv/eng/
WWF Latvia:
www.wwf.lv

Lithuania

Natura 2000:
www.natura2000.lt
Lithuanian Ministry of Environment:
www.am.lt
Lithuanian Fund for Nature:
www.glis.lt
Lithuanian Ornithological Society:
www.birdlife.lt

Malta

Nature Trust (Malta):
www.naturetrustmalta.org
The Malta Ecological Foundation:
www.ecomalta.org
Malta Environment and Planning Authority:
www.mepa.org.mt

Poland

Ministry of the Environment:
www.mos.gov.pl/
WWF Poland:
www.wwf.pl

Romania

Ministry of Waters and Environment Protection:
www.mappm.ro/

Slovakia

Slovak Ministry of Environment (in Slovak):
www.lifeenv.gov.sk/minis/
Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology:
www.daphne.sk

Slovenia

Ministry of the Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy:
www.sigov.si/mop/en/index.htm

Appendix – Questionnaire to monitor progress of Natura 2000 in Accession Countries

BULGARIA

Compiled by: Vesselina Kavrakova, WWF Danube Carpathian Programme Projects Officer, with the support from Toma Belev, Vitosha Nature Park Directorate, as well as from Valentina Fidanova and Simeon Marin from Green Balkans.

December 2002

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation Process

1) Who is in charge of the elaboration of the lists? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

The Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water and its regional units – the Regional Inspectorates for Environment and Water.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

According to final and closing provisions of the Bulgarian Act on Biodiversity adopted in August 2002, the list of protected sites to be designed as protected zones of the National Ecological Network (equivalent to the Natura 2000 network) should be prepared and submitted to the Council of Ministers within four years after the Act enters into force, i.e. by 2006. Field studies, inventories and field data collection, mapping and preparation of detailed information about the biodiversity and GIS maps will be needed for the preparation of the list of sites.

The date for formal submission of the official lists to the European Commission depends on the actual date of Bulgaria's accession to the European Union – according to current plans, possibly sometime in 2007.

3) Which steps has your government taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

Very few – the Act on Biodiversity (which reflects the EU Habitats and Birds Directives as a part of the approximation legislation) entered into force in 2002. Partial planning of future activities was undertaken in preparation of a project to be supported by DANCEE, through which the government intended to secure the necessary resources for completion of the pSCI lists.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes ☐
No ☒

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please provide some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

Besides the consultation process that took place in preparation of the Act on Biodiversity, no consultations have been organised to date for planning the process of elaborating lists of sites. The Ministry of Environment and Water recently expressed willingness to initiate a consultation and planning process for the elaboration of the lists, starting with meetings at the national level planned for the

end of 2002, and for the setting up expert working groups under the DANCEE supported project.

At the national level, some meetings and consultations have been organised regarding preparation of the terms of reference for the DANCEE-supported Natura 2000 Project.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☒
No ☒

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide a brief explanation on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

The involvement of NGOs has been limited so far to participation in the elaboration of the Act on Biodiversity as well as participation in very few seminars and working meetings on the topic.

Since there is no ongoing process for consultation, NGOs are as of yet not involved, though they can be expected to play a major role in the future.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, for what species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

For ca. 60 habitat types and ca. 240 species of wild flora and fauna (figures are not exact).

There is a lack of information on habitats in the Black Sea biogeographical region, which are new to the EU.

A great disadvantage is the lack of national assessments of species density and habitat distribution, which is needed for assessing the value of a given site.

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, what is being left out of their analysis? Please give examples.

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☐
No ☒

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

No measures have been taken so far, other than the request made by the Bulgarian government for DANCEE funding to support the country's preparation for Natura 2000. The Natura 2000 project, funded by DANCEE, is expected to fill these gaps. However, support for the project has been reduced to a third of the original budget and implementation time has been cut, so it is quite possible that the project will not meet expectations.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

Source	PHARE ACCESS 2000	Amount €	
Description			
Assisting the preparation of Bulgaria to set up the Natura 2000 European Ecological Network – carried out by the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife International.			
Project aims and objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To prepare the Bulgarian authorities and public for the establishment of the Natura 2000 network. ▪ To create conditions for the implementation of the Birds Directive, related to the setting up of the EMERALD/Natura 2000 ecological networks. ▪ To increase their popularity and rate of acceptance. 			
Project activities:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A series of seminars with representatives of institutions and local authorities in 3 pilot regions (Varna, Bourgas and Svish-tov). ▪ “Natura 2000 – for people and birds” informational campaign, implemented in the regions hosting Importat Bird Areas (IBA’s). Information offices for citizens established in four regional offices of the BSPB (Sofia, Varna, Bourgas and Svishtov) during the campaign. BSPB volunteers distribute brochures, posters and information about the benefits surrounding ecological networking. ▪ With the support of BlueLink (the electronic network of the Bulgarian environmental NGOs), a virtual seminar for NGOs was organised in the beginning of March 2002 with the aim of addressing and discussing questions related to the establishment of the European ecological network in Bulgaria. 			
Comments			
Short project (2001–2002) mainly of sectoral and regional importance.			

10) Are there any projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations, etc...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

Source	DANCEE	Amount €	520 000
Description			
Conservation of Habitats and Species: EU Approximation			
Expected four outputs:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A systematic network of candidate Natura 2000 sites established according to criteria of the European Natura 2000 network. ▪ Increased capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Water as well as the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, their regional offices, scientific institutions and NGOs to carry out inventories and identify potential Natura 2000 sites. ▪ Enhanced participation of local authorities and stakeholders in biodiversity planning and management. ▪ Raised biodiversity conservation awareness among the general public and authorities. 			
The project will be based at the National Nature Protection Service of the Ministry of Environment and Water and will work closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, and with local authorities. Scientists and NGOs will be sub-contracted for many of the activities, especially for the main surveys (inventories) of <u>flora and fauna</u> .			
Comments			
Significant difficulties were faced when starting the project. It was postponed numerous times for almost a year, but has now begun in October 2002, however, with a third of the original budget and an implementation period cut from 36 to 21 months.			

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☒

Please comment.

There is no such special budget foreseen.

12) In summary, how do you foresee the elaboration of the national list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☒
Some difficulties ☐
No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

- Insufficient funding and lack of human capacity for mapping and field work.
- Conflict of interests (mainly with the economic sector).
- Lack of integration of nature protection issues into other sectoral policies. The establishment of the network is not reflected in other sectoral plans and programmes and will lead to conflicts during implementation.
- Lack of public awareness and inadequate information among local communities – opposition of local residents to the designation of Natura 2000 sites can be expected.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plans or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please specify the most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and the nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...). Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB...).

Kresna gorge

The government of Bulgaria intends to construct the Struma motorway in south-western Bulgaria as a part of Transport corridor no. 4, connecting Dresden, Budapest, Sofia and Istanbul, with a branch from Sofia to Thessaloniki. The Kresna gorge is situated along an area of outstanding nature value, a CORINE site and future NATURA 2000 site. Starting from 1997 until the present, all plans and designs for the construction of the motorway have planned the motorway to pass through the entire length of the gorge, thus destroying this outstanding nature value. The feasibility study and the design of the motorway have been financed by the EU PHARE-Cross Border Co-operation Programme between Bulgaria and Greece. With financial memoranda in 1998 and 1999, the Bulgarian government, represented by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW), received a total amount of 3,342,450 € for the project E-79 Detailed Design Studies for Motorway Sofia-Kulata (Struma motorway). The Italian company SPEA Ingegneria Europea was contracted in April 2000 and carried out the design, feasibility study and planning.

Pirin National Park

In the 1980s, an alpine ski area was illegally developed above the town of Bansko and within the boundaries of Pirin National Park, an official UNESCO world heritage site. In recent years, under the pressure of Bulgarian private investors supported by foreign banks (including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), a campaign has started focused on enlarging the existing ski-area. In response, the Bansko municipality has invested in the development of a project which envisages a three-fold increase in the ski area. At the beginning of 2000, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works approved the project. In July 2000, the Ministry of the Environment and Waters (MEW) considered the project and gave a positive decision in accordance with the requirements of the procedure for Environmental Impact Assessments. After the decision of the MEW, the area of the ski-zone was reduced, and at the moment, there is approval for the construction of 2 new ski runs, enlargement of two old ones, 3 ski ropes, and 1 chair lift in the valley of the Banderitsa river. The projects for one large ski run, a ski-road and enlargement of old ski runs are being planned.

Their construction will lead to the clear-cutting of a total area of about 50 ha of old growth spruce, Macedonian pines, and mountain pine forests. Populations of animal and plant species in the area will be threatened, including species from the IUCN Red List and the Bern Convention. All these activities will take place along the borders of one of the two strictly protected core Nature Reserves in the Park-Yulen. The new ski runs will cause erosion and will have extremely negative general effects on the overall landscape of the biggest valley in the park. The construction of the ski area is in violation of a number of national and international conservation laws.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation

14) Are there any gap in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If yes, please give details.

The preparation of the Bulgarian Act on Biodiversity seeks to translate the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives into national legislation. The final version of the Act was adopted quite recently (August 2002) and no conclusive analyses of the legislation have yet been undertaken.

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If yes, please give details.

The government made the effort to ensure legislation approximation in the field of nature protection through the elaboration of the Act on Biodiversity, which transposes both EU Directives (Birds and Habitats) into the national legislation. During the elaboration of the Act, the opinions of NGOs and independent experts were taken into consideration, which was a certain guarantee for preventing any gaps.

The final version of the Act is not yet been thoroughly analysed. There have not been any expert opinions addressed to the government to take action, so for the moment, no special measures are foreseen to address gaps in the legislation.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If so, with which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☒
No ☐

The Natura 2000 requirements are practically not integrated into sectoral policies. The legislation and normative basis, which regulate other sectors, are already developed and enforced. In addition, other sectors of the state are economically more powerful. Any significant changes arising from the introduction of new legislation in the area of nature protection, and especially those related to the establishment of a wider network of protect areas (particularly one that has not involved consultation with other sectors), will lead to conflicts.

An example: The National Biological Diversity Conservation Strategy, developed recently, is not reflected in sectoral plans – despite the fact that it was officially launched and endorsed by the Council of Ministers. In fact, the Strategy was included in the commitments of the Ministries through the Action Plan for the Strategy's implementation. Unfortunately, the Action Plan is considered a document that is only relevant to the Ministry of Environment and Water and not other ministries.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmer organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	Insufficient
At national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what the main problems are and which actions are required to address them.

The degree of understanding and knowledge about Natura 2000 is still very limited even among experts from relevant authorities. The wider public is for the most part uninformed about the network, i.e. the changes and possible benefits arising from its establishment, as well as future procedures that will be implemented. Most people, especially local communities around or in potential Natura 2000 sites or national protected areas, are not aware of the fact that the protected areas networks may be a sustainable source of income and do not know what possibilities exist in this regard. Expert input in this sense is missing and training of professionals is of crucial importance.

How the network will be considered depends very much on undertaking proper communications, education, information and awareness raising campaigns adapted to local conditions.

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

Assisting the preparation of Bulgaria to set up the Natura 2000 European Ecological Network (2001–2002) is a project of the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife International (see description above). No other significant activities are ongoing at the moment.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key players?

Concerted activities at all levels (local, regional, and national) with the participation of NGOs, scientists, experts from relevant authorities, and (importantly) the general public.

Co-ordination and co-operation among different stakeholders to achieve a synergetic effect and to ensure a coherent overall result of the particular campaigns and projects.

Conclusion

20) Please list 5 priority actions for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country.

1. Improvement of available scientific information – carrying out of inventories, field surveys, gap analyses, mapping of habitats, preparation of maps, GIS processing of information.

Capacity building and strengthening of institutions in charge of the process and their potential partners, raising the level of expert knowledge, training, issuing of specialised publications (handbooks, guidelines, etc.).

2. Awareness raising and broad public campaigns; working with the media, small or medium-sized demonstration projects and programmes, involvement of interested groups from the public in practical work for habitat restoration, etc.

3. Fundraising to enable the implementation of the above activities.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Compiled by: Mojmir Vlasin, Veronica Ecological Institute, Czech Union for Nature Conservation.

January 2003

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation process

1.) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment)

The Czech Ministry of Environment, which is responsible for Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic, has charged the Czech Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection, which is supported and managed by the ministry, with collecting data and preparing the official list of sites. The Central Administration of the Protected Landscape Areas is responsible for collecting data in the Protected Landscape Areas, though under the guidance and co-ordination of the Czech Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection. The Czech Ornithological Society (Czech BirdLife) has been contracted by the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection to prepare lists of birds areas (SPA's).

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

2003

1. Adoption of the new Act on Nature and Landscape Protection (March 2003)
2. Presentation of the list of nominated SPA areas to the various ministries (December 2003)
3. Discussion with stakeholders in nominated pSCI's and approved SPA areas in the Pannonic biogeographical region (until May 2004).
4. First draft of sites ready (December 2003)

24

2004

1. Final list of sites submitted to European Commission (April 2004)
- 3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

Habitats:

The Ministry of Environment and the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection have organised habitat mapping conducted by experts on contracts – a total of some 550 people are currently on contract for mapping, with another 16 co-ordinators. Mapping was started in 2000 as a pilot project and has continued to the present – approximately 2/3 of the mapping was completed by the end of 2002.

Mapping of habitats belonging to the Pannonian biogeographic region (southeastern Moravia, ca. 5.3% of the Czech Republic's total area) are almost completed, and first meetings with local stakeholders are scheduled to begin in spring 2003.

Mapping for bird areas (SPA's), which has been undertaken by the Czech Ornithological Society (Czech member of BirdLife International), has been completed, and first meetings with local stakeholders are scheduled to begin in spring 2003. The list of proposed SPA sites will be submitted to the government at the end of 2003.

Two types of mapping have been undertaken: 1. ordinary habitat mapping, and 2. contextual mapping, i.e. mapping only at the sites where, according to CORINE and other information sources, valuable habitats or species are known to exist (Ordinary habitat mapping: ca. ¾ completed; contextual mapping: ca. ½ completed). Mapping of habitats is expected to be completed by December 2003, though some additional information is expected to be added later.

Species:

The Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection is collecting data on selected species, including e.g. vertebrates, insects, and plants. The Agency has been relying on existing databases and a limited amount of mapping, for which it has been using its own employees as well as outside consultants (a total of ca. 100-200 people, plus ca. 5 co-ordinators). The list of proposed areas for species are expected to be completed in September-October 2003.

Data collection in Protected Landscape Areas (PLA) is being undertaken separately by the relevant PLA authorities, under guidance from and coordination by the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection.

Ca. 65 employees of the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection are currently working on preparations for Natura 2000 (in addition to the external consultants and staff involved in species and habitats mapping that are noted above).

Ca. 2 people are currently involved with Natura 2000 at the Ministry of Environment. This number is apparently planned to increase to ca. 5 in 2003.

Progress on mapping in the Czech Republic (GIS map) can be seen on the Internet at: <http://www.nature2000.cz>.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes



No



At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including on the consultations that are planned when none has been undertaken yet.

There are currently four pilot projects focused on communications and negotiation organised by four Protected Landscape Areas (Třeboňsko, Bílé Karpaty, Beskydy, and Litovelské Pomoraví). First consultations with stakeholders regarding Natura 2000 have taken place in these areas.

Additional consultations ("preliminary consultations", or "information meetings", since the consultations are coming before government approval of the list) are planned for proposed pSCI's in the Pannonian biogeographical region (ca. 5.3% of total area of the Czech Republic) as well as in SPA's are scheduled to begin in spring 2003, and to be followed by consultations with local stakeholders in other areas of the country as soon as proposed sites are identified (see below under information campaigns for more on this).

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform)

“Scientific” NGOs (e.g. Czech Botanical Society, Czech Entomological Society, Czech Ornithological Society) have been involved in providing data. The Czech Ornithological Society was contracted by the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection to identify significant sites for birds (SPA’s).

Co-operation is now growing with other NGOs as well, including the Czech Union for Nature Conservation (CSOP), Arnika, and others, particularly in connection with general capacity building and awareness raising/educational activities (e.g. organisation of workshops, co-operation on maintaining website, etc.).

Leading Czech environmental organisations that are focused on nature conservation (including Czech Union of Nature Conservationists, Czech Ornithological Society, Moravian Ornithological Club, Arnika) have recently (January 18, 2003) established an NGO coalition to promote Natura 2000.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give example.

The amount of information available is generally quite good, in places even excellent, but weaknesses remain in some particular areas.

Habitats mapping is excellent – there is an excellent catalogue of biotopes in the Czech Republic: Chytrý M., Kučera T. and Kočí M. (eds): Katalog biotopů České republiky (Catalogue of Habitats of the Czech Republic), AOPK ČR, Praha 2002. With additional mapping being conducted for Natura 2000, the data set for habitats should be sufficient.

The same can be said for birds, for which the Czech Ornithological Society has excellent information.

Data for less well-known species, including invertebrates, lower plants (mosses, lichen), and amphibians is scarcer. For these species types there is no central database or inventory (in contrast to birds or habitats), and data that exists is scattered among numerous museums, universities, and institutes. One of the by-products of the current preparation for Natura 2000 is the consolidation of this data and the creation of central databases of information for these species. Despite this, the quality of the data for these taxa will not be as good as for better-known species and habitats.

7) If yes, is your Government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Experts from the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection are using data from the databases of the Ministry of Agriculture, Institute for Forest Management, Academy of Sciences, universities, museums, etc.

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

See answers above – gaps are being addressed through ongoing data collection/consolidation as well as mapping.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

Source	PHARE Access Macro	Amount €	175 000
Description			
Natura 2000 awareness raising projects in three model cross-border areas: Elbe river valley (Czech Republic and Germany), Odra river valley (Czech Republic and Poland), Morava river valley (Czech Republic and Slovakia). Activities include: workshops and town meetings, communications activities (brochures, exhibits), and analysis of regional development plans and government documents regarding impact on potential Natura 2000 sites.			
Project partners: Arnika (lead); Lower Silesian Foundation for Eco-development (Poland); Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology (Slovakia); CSOP Veronica (Czech Republic); Danish Nature Conservancy.			
Comments			
...			

Source	PHARE Access Micro	Amount €	48 000
Description			
Natura 2000 capacity building and awareness raising – series of seminars, workshops, as well as smaller meetings focused on raising awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 among NGOs, regional authorities, and special interest groups (associations of landowners, fishermen, hunters, farmers, etc.).			
Project leader: CSOP Veronica (on behalf of Czech Union of Nature Conservationists), WWF Austria as partner.			
Comments			
...			

There is an attempt to raise funding from EU on promoting Natura 2000 via Europark, but the project is still being discussed with the EU.

8) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...)?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Please if you have these information, name the funding source, give the amount of support, and provide a brief description of the project.

Source	Regional Environmental Center (REC)	Amount €	2 000
Description			
Natura 2000 Shadow List – identification of valuable sites which should be included in the Natura 2000 network.			
Comments			
CSOP Veronica			

Source	DfID (United Kingdom)	Amount €	19 141
Description			
Natura 2000 awareness raising pilot projects in three Protected Landscape Areas (Třebon, Beskydy and White Carpathians), including various communications activities and consultations on potential Natura 2000 sites with local stakeholders and capacity building activities, e.g. study trip to UK for PLA administrators, NGOs, and municipalities on Natura 2000.			
Project partners: Czech Environmental Partnership Foundation, in co-operation with Protected Landscape Area administrations and NGOs.			
Comments			
...			

Source	MATRA (Netherlands)	Amount €	
Description			
Support for Implementation of Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic (MATO/CZ/9/2) – application of Dutch know how and experience for implementation of Natura 2000 in the area of Třebon, including preparation of management plans.			
Project partners: DHV Group, Syzygy, and DHV Czech Republic, for Czech Ministry of Environment.			
Comments			
Information on project available at: http://www.dhv.cz/natura2000			

Source		Amount €	
Description			
Natura 2000 and Birds.			
Comments			
Czech Ornithological Society (member of BirdLife International).			

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Please comment

The government budget is now generally adequate for basic site selection.

The Czech Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection has estimated that some 150 million CZK (ca. 4.8 million €) is needed per year to prepare for Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic. Actual budgets: in 2001=73 million CZK (ca. 2.3 million €); in 2002 = 65 million CZK (ca. 2.08 million €). Amount requested by the Agency from the Ministry for Environment for 2003: ca. 60-79 million CZK (ca. 1.9–2.2 million €) – decisions on 2003 budget should be made by the end of January. Insecurity regarding financing for Natura 2000 in summer 2002 delayed some of the mapping work. Though the financial and human resources that are now available are generally adequate, the insecurity regarding funding last summer resulted in missing part of the vegetation season.

The proposed budget for 2003 includes ca. 18 million CZK (ca. 576 000 €) earmarked for communications activities related to Natura 2000 (see below).

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
Some difficulties ☐
No difficulties ☒

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

Assuming that current plans are realised, the proposed list of pSCI that the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection presents for approval by the Czech government at the end of 2003 should be generally adequate, though some additional data from an extra vegetation season will need to be added later. Data concerning particular areas including lower plants, invertebrates, and amphibians can be expected to be weaker than that for others.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plans or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please specify most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...). Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, Phare, EIB ...).

Transportation: e.g. highway through the Czech Middle Mountains Protected Landscape Areas (Česke středohoří), a proposed SAC; D47 highway and related developments, affecting a number of SPA's and SAC's.

Energy: dam at Nový Hermínov, a proposed SAC.

Water management: Nové Mlýny reservoir system (3 dams), a proposed SPA.

Transportation: Danube-Oder-Elbe canal, impacting (among many other potential Natura 2000 sites in the Czech Republic, Poland and Germany) the Morava-Dyje wetlands, a Ramsar site and proposed SAC and SPA.

Transportation: Navigation on the Elbe near Ústí nad Labem; navigation on the Elbe-Pardubice canal.

National Park administration: Logging in the Šumava National Park, a proposed SPA and SAC.

BirdLife has conducted an evaluation of the impact of plans for the Trans-European Network for Transportation (TEN-T) on Important Bird Areas, and is now considering doing a similar study with regard to SPA's.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
No ☐

There are only few paragraphs which need to be changed in the Czech Law on Nature Protection (e.g. §14 on special protected areas, §43 alternative solutions according to Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, etc.). Unfortunately, there is strong pressure from a large number of parliamentary deputies to use the opportunity to weaken nature protection provisions contained in other paragraphs.

A significant problem is lack of legislation regulating compensation in connection with Natura 2000. The Ministry of Environment apparently plans to introduce a special law on compensation, but has so far not done anything to make this happen. This means that it will take at least a year, and possibly longer, for such legislation to be in place. This will significantly complicate communications and consultation with stakeholders on Natura 2000, who will naturally want to know what implications the conservation network will have for them.

15) Is the Government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Draft legislation is being discussed in Parliament and should be passed in February or March 2003. No progress yet with regard to regulating compensation.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☐
No ☐

There is little or no integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies. Outside (and even inside) the Ministry of Environment, knowledge of Natura 2000 among civil servants is very limited. There is scarcely any effective coordination or co-operation between individual ministries – a fact underlined by the various threats to proposed Natura 2000 sites that are mentioned above.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stockholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users – hunters/fishermen organisations, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	Insufficient
At national level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what are the main problems and which actions are required to address them.

Aside from some areas (e.g. White Carpathians, Beskydy, and Třeboň Protected Landscape Areas), knowledge and understanding of Natura 2000 is at present still minimal, limited largely to a relatively small group of experts and conservationists.

Some steps are now being taken to improve this situation – please see discussion below.

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the Government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

The budget available to the Ministry of Environment and Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection for communications related to Natura 2000 has been very limited to date. They have published some general publications on Natura 2000 as well as a Czech version of a guide for implementing article 6 of the Habitats Directive, and Natura 2000 in questions and answers, which is targeted at the general public. They have also launched a very good website devoted to Natura 2000 (www.natura2000.cz), which includes general as well as specific information, articles and publications, links, and numerous discussion groups, including ones devoted to NGOs which are maintained by the NGO Arnika. There is one person at the Agency that is currently working on communications related to Natura 2000.

For 2003, the Agency has requested 18 million CKZ (ca. 576 000 €) for communications related to Natura 2000. Apparently, the Ministry has agreed in principle to this request and will make a final decision on funding by the end of January 2003. Communications activities proposed by the Agency include: a series of moderated information meetings (“pre-consultation”) with local stakeholders in areas selected as SPA’s as well as pSCI’s that already have been identified in the Pannonian region of southern Moravia; parallel to this, a national information campaign on Natura 2000 involving a professional PR agency, and possibly involving TV advertising. Facilitated information meetings are planned to follow in other parts of the country as soon as sites are identified.

CSOP Veronica has begun work on a Priority List of Natura 2000 sites and is also organising a series of workshops to promote Natura 2000 among public authorities, NGOs, stakeholders, and the general public.

The NGO Arnika has produced several leaflets and folders about Natura 2000 in general as well as about particular areas and cases (Elbe river, Czech Middle Mountains Protected Landscape Area)

The NGOs White Carpathians Information Center (VIS) and CSOP Salamandr have published information leaflets on Natura 2000 in the Beskydy and White Carpathians Protected Landscape Areas as well as organised information campaigns in these areas. A special workshop for Protected Landscape Areas on experience from these pilot projects is planned for March 2003.

The Czech Ornithological Society has produced a brochure on Natura 2000 and SPA’s, and has organised an exhibit on 15 selected bird areas (IBA’s and SPA’s), which is now at the National Museum in Prague and will travel to other parts of the country throughout 2003.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

A professional campaign undertaken with professional consultants to bring Natura 2000 closer to the people. It is especially necessary to explain Natura 2000 to special interest groups such as hunters, foresters, anglers, landowners, hikers, etc.

Conclusions

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Finish mapping of habitats and species.
2. Prepare the official draft list of sites.
3. Start a communications campaign on Natura 2000 with involvement of stakeholders, including NGOs.
4. Fill gaps in legislation, including law on compensation.
5. Prepare a priority list (or shadow list) of Natura 2000 sites and discuss this at national level, especially among NGOs.

ESTONIA

Compiled by: Rein Kuresoo, Estonian Fund for Nature

December 2002

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation Process

1) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

Ministry of Environment – coordinating the preparation of pSCIs, adjustments in legislation, designation of sites.

NGOs, experts, scientific institutions – fieldwork, scientific inventories, proposing new sites.

County Environmental Departments – preparing the preliminary list of pSCIs for counties, organising public hearings.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

A national programme outlining actions for years 2000–2007, Estonian NATURA 2000, has been adopted by the government. The timetable for most relevant actions foresees the following:

1. Gathering and evaluating existing data – March 2001.
2. Analysis of correspondence between existing protected areas, pSCIs and SPAs – December 2001.
3. Preliminary list of pSCIs and SPAs – March 2001.
4. Additional inventories on species and habitats – September 2001.
5. Analysis of the lists in environmental departments of counties – March 2002.
6. Additions to the list – November 2002.
7. Hearings and negotiations with stakeholders – March 2002.
8. Publishing the list – March 2002.
9. Final preparations for adoption of the list – December 2002.

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

Activities have been carried out roughly according to the above timetable:

Inventories of habitats and species have been done by different experts in the framework of various projects.

The national site selection working group has made the preliminary selection based on these inventories, as well as the existing data. Final selection will be done at the end of 2002.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes ☒
No ☐

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please provide some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

Meetings have been held mostly at the regional level. In some regions, meetings with stakeholders have also been conducted at the municipal level.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☒
No ☒

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

Although the Ministry of Environment has formally invited NGOs into the process, it has been quite selective in choosing co-operation partners – e.g. the Estonian Fund for Nature, having the most extensive database on Estonian habitats, has been practically left out. Unfortunately, there has been a un-cooperative attitude from both sides.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☒
No ☒

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

Inventories are clearly insufficient for some invertebrates.

Although there are satisfactory inventories for most land-based habitats, there is a gap in knowledge regarding marine habitats.

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, what is being left out of their analysis? Please give examples.

The database of habitat inventories of the Estonian Fund for Nature is practically not used at all, except for published materials. The Ministry and environmental departments of counties have launched their own small-scale inventories.

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

Field work to improve knowledge on distribution of habitats has been quite extensive, but somewhat badly co-ordinated.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have any information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

...

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations, etc...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

Source	DANCEE	Amount €	174 944
Description			
Inventory of Species and Habitats Protected by International Conventions and Directives in Estonia.			
Comments			
...			

Source	DANCEE	Amount €	430 631
Description			
Implementation of EU Birds Directive and Habitats Directive in Lääne and Rapla counties.			
Comments			
...			

Source	DANCEE	Amount €	619 006
Description			
Implementation of Natura 2000 network in Estonia regarding freshwater and brackish water species and habitats.			
Comments			
...			

Source	Council of the Ministries of Nordic Countries	Amount €	
Description			
Preparation of a manual on NATURA 2000 habitats.			
Comments			
...			

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☒
No ☒

Please comment.

Yes, it is sufficient to do the basic work. No, it does not cover all possible gaps in knowledge, nor does it meet the needs for informing the public.

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
Some difficulties ☒
No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

There is a strong tendency to focus most of the Natura 2000 areas on existing protected areas.

The coverage of areas varies from county to county and reflects strongly the level of understanding of local conservation experts.

There is a possibility that at a later stage the list or the site borders will be politically manipulated due to pressure from development interests.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plans or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please specify most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...). Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB...).

Bridge over the proposed Väinameri Natura 2000 site – the EU ISPA pre-accession may be involved in this.

More generally – semi-natural habitats are threatened by abandonment, coastal sites by development, peatlands by excavation, and forests by uncontrolled cutting.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please give details.

New Law on Nature Conservation has been drafted by the Ministry of Environment, but a few lucky representatives of NGOs have actually seen it. According to their words, the draft law would provide inadequate protection for new Natura 2000 sites.

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please give details.

Probably yes, but the Ministry of Environment has so far been quite poor in communicating on these matters.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☒
No ☐

There are gaps in all policies, but most important in fiscal matters, spatial planning and transport development.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmer organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, and other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	Insufficient
At national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please, give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what the main problems are and which actions are required to address them.

The EU brings many issues concerning all walks of life. Those concerning nature conservation are regarded as marginal, except for direct stakeholders (mostly landowners in proposed areas). Difficulties from landowners arise from the obscurity of the legal and financial backgrounds for Natura 2000 areas – the mechanism of compensations or subsidies is not yet clear.

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

There have been articles in newspapers, several posters and pamphlets that have been prepared, two video films have been made; information is also available on the internet.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

More meetings are necessary. The distribution of materials (posters, pamphlets and films) should be more widely available.

NGOs should be more actively involved in awareness raising, which until now has been clearly beyond the capacity of the relevant authorities.

Conclusion

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Bring discussion of the list of Natura 2000 areas into a much broader perspective.
2. Provide adequate legal, financial, and socio-economic mechanisms for implementation of Natura 2000 network.
3. Secure acceptance by local people and authorities.
4. Prepare management plans.
5. Digitalize the site borders on maps.

LATVIA

Compiled by: Ints Mednis, WWF Latvia.

January 2003

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation process

1) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development is responsible for amending the legislation, site designation, and organisation of public hearings.

Environmental Inspectors are responsible for data collection. (County Environmental Departments have not been involved so far).

NGOs, experts and scientific institutions are involved in fieldwork, scientific inventories and proposals of complementary sites.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

Scientific lists will be submitted to the European Commission by the date of the accession, i.e. May 1, 2004. The draft list will be developed by the end of 2003.

The period for consultations among ministries is still unclear.

Other consultations – still unclear timetable.

There are no strict timetables for the preparation of the official list of pSCI.

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

The process for preparing the official list of sites consists of different processes that are occurring simultaneously, including: evaluation of existing protected areas, drafting of new amendments for a law on protected sites, and the distribution of the draft list of potential sites. Some difficulties have appeared with regard to co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the SJSC "Latvian State Forests".

Inventories – full inventories are ongoing in the existing protected areas (PAs).

Areas proposed as Special Protection Areas – few new sites have been proposed.

In 2002, experts proposed 22 new sites; 13 of them were approved as possible new sites.

The pSCI list of potential Natura 2000 sites will be completed by the end of 2003.

Date of final approval by the Environmental Ministry is still unclear.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes ☒
No ☐

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

National – Consultations have been held at national level with scientists and foreign consulting companies.

The Danish consulting company DARUDEC is managing the entire process. Scientists and some NGOs (e.g. Latvian Ornithological Society, Latvian Fund for Nature, specialists from protected areas) are subcontracted for the field inventories.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☒ (Partially)
No ☐

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

Only two local NGOs are directly involved, e.g. subcontractors of DARUDEC – Latvian Fund for Nature and Latvian Ornithology Society. These NGOs execute the field surveys and they can propose some changes. There are also some seminars and trainings organized for organizations involved in the field works and also for dissemination of the results.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

For the following habitat types: lack of sufficient information about distribution and total area of grasslands and springs (2001). Also, some forest experts think that there are gaps in the scientific information for forest habitat types and bogs.

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, what is being left out of their analysis? Please give examples.

The EMERALD project is using the best available information, combining all the scientific data. Outdated information is not used. The scientific information used is based on previous research and inventories. Some information is updated drawing on EU experience and ongoing inventories. However, in general, the government is not using all available scientific information for preparation of the Natura 2000 sites (e.g. lack of vision, static approach, no ecological corridors, etc.).

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

A grasslands inventory 2002–2003 is ongoing.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

Source	LIFE	Amount €	650 000
Description			
Implementation of the Engure Lake Nature Park management plan 2001–2005.			
Comments			
Renewal and management of coastal meadows, mowing and grazing, buying out the privately owned land in the nature reserve zone etc.			

Source	LIFE	Amount €	206 543
Description			
Protection and management of Zvarde and Katlesi IBAs 2001–2004.			
Comments			
Implementation measures for protection of two IBAs in Latvia.			

Source	LIFE	Amount €	1 504 905
Description			
Measures to Ensure the Nature Conservation Management of Kemer National Park 2003–2005.			
Comments			
Measures for restoration of wetland, meadow and forest habitats have been commenced in the project.			

Source	LIFE	Amount €	1 774 891
Description			
Measures to Ensure the Nature Conservation in the Coastal areas 2003–2005.			
Comments			
Measures for restoration of coastal habitats have been commenced in the project along all Latvian coast.			

Source		Amount €	
Description			
Project proposals for financing from EU LIFE 2003 were submitted in September 2002. Results are not yet available.			
Comments			
...			

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...)

Yes ☐
No ☒

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

Source	DANCEE	Amount €	1 000 000
Description			
The government has hired consultant DARUDEC, who is responsible for the activities mentioned below.			
Comments			
Preparation for Latvia's Compliance with the Emerald and Natura 2000 networks of protected areas 2001-2003 (starting at the beginning of 2001), has had a strong focus on field inventories. For assessment of total areas of the habitat types, remote-sensing techniques and existing Corine-land-cover data have been used.			

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☒

Please comment.

More national support should be provided. Only some support from the Latvian Environmental Protection Fund has been available.

The financial aspects of Natura 2000, including compensation mechanisms, have still not been addressed.

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
Some difficulties ☒
No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

The pSCI will be based on the existing network of protected areas, with no ecological reference for the country as a whole.

The designation of the new sites will be complicated, since most of them are located on private land. The government has been doing very little to communicate with landowners. The usual approach has been to establish protected areas (paper parks) first, and only inform landowners afterwards.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plan or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please specify the most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...). Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB...).

Socio-economic considerations should be taken into account in preparing the site-specific management plans. The Ministry of Environment has little power or will to withstand development interests and achieve more favourable nature conservation legislation.

An example is the recent boom in construction of small hydro-electric power stations on Latvian rivers in places that are rich in species and habitats, including ones that are eligible for protection under the Birds and Habitats Directives. Construction of the hydro-power stations has been encouraged by "perverse subsidies" for such stations. To date, 120 hydro-electric power stations have been built, and only two of them have fish passes, meaning that habitats are destroyed and rivers are fragmented for migratory fish, including salmon, grayling, lamprey. The Ministry of Environment is responsible for monitoring operation of the hydro-electric power stations (law enforcement), but so far has shown no ability to control the damage caused by the stations.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please give details.

The Latvian Law on Nature Protection has already been harmonised to a great extent with the requirements of the European Commission and of the relevant international conventions. However, some legislation is not yet in place (leg-hold traps, for example). Furthermore, the implementing regulation and the designation of special protected areas under the Birds Directive are not yet complete. The problem is low capacity within the ministry.

Law on hunting is amended.

Construction of small hydro-electric power stations does not require complex Environmental Impact Assessments to be conducted.

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☒ Partially
No ☐

The Water Management Plan was adopted in September 2002.

The Latvian Sustainable Development Strategy was adopted in September 2002.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transports developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☒
No ☐

The *acquis* has been largely transposed, but its practical implementation remains far from completion. There is a lack of additional financial incentives. The process for implementing Natura 2000 has begun. However, as long as the list of sites is not clear, nothing will happen with the integration of requirements into sectoral policies. The existence of the Environmental Impact Assessment ensures at least a minimum amount of integration of the requirements into projects. However, Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA's) in sectoral policies and plans have not been carried out.

There is no legislation for Strategic Environmental Assessments for structural policies and assessment of strategies.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	Insufficient
At national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please, give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what the main problems are and which actions are required to address them.

There needs to be raised public awareness on both the positive and negative aspects of the EU nature protection policies. The general understanding of Natura 2000 and ecological processes is very low among decision makers on the local and national level as well for the rest of the society.

The idea of Natura 2000 is still unknown for the broad public. Recently, state authorities have become aware of it, but unfortunately, this has not led to any practical change. A very limited amount of printed material in the Latvian language is available.

A communication strategy simply does not exist. A clear message on Natura 2000 should be defined for each target group (politicians, local authorities, state institutions, landowners, etc.).

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

Natura 2000 info-days, biodiversity days, prepared publications by contracted parties, seminars for foresters.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

The SJSC "Latvia State Forests", municipalities and private owners are the main landowners of the future designed sites. Additional negotiations and explanations about Natura 2000 and the site designation process are at an early stage and should be ensured in the future.

Conflict resolution mechanisms should be developed to avoid additional difficulties for the site designation and cross-cutting socio-economic interests.

Conclusions

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Definition of ecological reference (e.g. clear criteria regarding what should be protected, why and how much) as base for the Natura 2000 sites designation and nature development in the country.
2. Designate all potential sites that meet Natura 2000 criteria.
3. Training and capacity building of relevant authorities.
4. Develop a conflict resolution mechanism for Natura 2000 implementation process.
5. Consultations with all stakeholders, e.g. land and forest owners, at early stages (before the site is designated and approved by government).
6. Improve communication with potential stakeholders (forestry, NGO's, municipalities, etc.)
7. Improve management of existing protected areas by introducing sustainable methods, e.g. grazing instead of mowing, etc.

LITHUANIA

Compiled by: Pranas Mierauskas and Edmundas Greimas, Lithuanian Fund for Nature

January 2003

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation process

1) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

Ministry of Environment and Nature Conservation Agency.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

Preliminary list of pSCI: September 2001.

Final list of pSCI: October 2002.

Designation of previously unprotected sites through consultations with various stakeholders (e.g. various Ministries, local municipalities, communities): October 2002–October 2003.

Adoption of the final list at governmental level: November 2003.

Submission of the list to Commission: December 2003.

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

The preliminary list of pSCI has been established.

Consultations with local stakeholders have been initiated.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes ☒
No ☐

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including on the consultations that are planned when none has been undertaken yet.

At national level (with scientific specialists).

Scientists and some NGO's (e.g. Lithuanian Ornithological Society, Lithuanian Fund for Nature) have provided a lot of information on potential sites.

The Ministry of Environment has initiated consultations at the local level.

The regional level will come next (~ December 2002), when work at the local level has been clarified.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

The Lithuanian Fund for Nature and the Lithuanian Ornithological Society have been invited for consultations on a selection of potential sites as well as meetings for the preparation of legal acts. Both NGOs have been able to suggest potential pSCIs.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

Information on birds (list of SPA's) is of the best quality.

There is good information on mammals (lynx, bats), pond turtle, and for most of the fish and plants.

Information on some species such as snails, vertigo, and bark beetles (*Cucujus canniiberinus*) is scarce.

The distribution and total area of most Annex I habitats is unknown.

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☒
No ☐

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

The Lithuanian government is using DANCEE funding (project 2002–2003) to carry out field surveys and to fill data gaps.

The Lithuanian Ornithological Society is drawing on support from Birdlife International to complement the bird data.

Some administrations of protected nature areas (e.g. national parks, regional parks, etc.) are gathering information about Natura 2000 habitats and species.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

Source	PHARE	Amount €	~ 1 700 000
Description			
Preparation of Management Plans for Natura 2000 Areas.			
Comments			
Tender will be opened by the end of 2002.			

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...)

Yes ☒
No ☐

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

Source	DANCEE	Amount €	~ 1 000 000
Description			
Implementation of Natura 2000 in Lithuania at Local and Regional Level.			
Comments			
Duration: 24 months (January 2002 – December 2003).			

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☒

Please comment.

No money has been spent from the National budget.

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
Some difficulties ☒
No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

Creation of the pSCI list is not a difficulty in itself, however, the designation of new Natura 2000 sites that are not already protected will be our big challenge.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plans or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please specify the most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...). Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB ...).

Conventional timber logging is threatening potential Natura 2000 sites.

Overgrowth of grassland habitats is also a problem.

A plan to build a number of small to medium scale hydro power energy generating plants on rivers would result in extinction of anadromous fish species, present on Annex II (Habitat Directive).

This project is initiated by local investors.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please give details.

Articles 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive is not transposed to national legislation appropriately.

The National Law on Protected Areas provides only statutory mechanisms for designation of future Natura 2000 sites.

Administrative and contractual mechanisms are either not foreseen or vaguely defined.

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please give details.

A whole package of EIA legislation will be amended by April 2003, including transposition of Article 6.3 and 6.4 of Habitat Directive.

No plans exist to amend or improve the Law on Protected Areas.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☒
No ☐

It is a problem to integrate Natura 2000 in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	Insufficient
At national level	government, hunters, NGOs	farmers landowners fishermen
At regional level	NGOs	farmers landowners government hunters
At local level		farmers landowners government hunters NGOs

Please, give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what the main problems are and which actions are required to address them.

Introduction of Natura 2000 in Lithuania has been very much based on a “top-down” approach; the regional (county) and local (municipal) governments know little about this process.

Awareness of Natura 2000 among farmers is very low or simply absent at all levels. However, foresters (both state and private) are generally more aware of Natura 2000.

Hunters are more aware of general restrictions stemming from the directives (e.g. ban on spring hunting) than restrictions in potential Natura 2000 sites.

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

Publications

- Brochure: Natura 2000 in Lithuania.
- Brochure: Natura 2000 Habitats.
- Brochure: Guide for Implementation of the Article 6 of Habitats Directive.

A number of seminars and workshops for various stakeholders at the national level have also been held.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

Much more effort should be applied to launching and continuing a constructive discussion between government and forest owners (state and private) as well as fishermen.

More information should be provided about Natura 2000 at the local (municipal) level.

Environmental authorities are not aware of how they are going to implement Natura 2000 at regional/local levels.

Conclusion

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Designate all sites meeting Natura 2000 criteria that are not already protected at the national level.
2. Initiate and continue consultations/discussions with the forestry sector.
3. Involve local municipalities and NGO's in designation of Natura 2000 sites.
4. Compile comprehensive database about all real and potential Natura 2000 sites.
5. Enable staff of protected areas to monitor and manage Natura 2000 sites.

HUNGARY

Compiled by: Brigitta Bozsó, WWF Hungary – in close co-operation with CEEWEB (Zsófia Tomcsányi and András Krolopp) as well as Birdlife Hungary (András Kovacs).

November 2002

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation process

1) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment)

The Ministry of Environment and Water is responsible for the preparation for Natura 2000 through the Nature Conservation Agency, which takes the lead in managing the process.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

Scientific proposal ready by September 2001.

Consultations with National Park Authorities during 2002 – this process seems to be stalled at the moment.

Formal submission: December 2003 (day of accession: May 1, 2004 at the latest).

No special timing has been planned for consultations with various ministries and the public

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

Twinning project in 2000 and 2001 with Spanish and Finnish conservation professionals and Environmental Ministry staff – exchange of professional know-how.

Beneficiary of a PHARE project for scientific data collection and analysis September 2000–September 2001.

Three seminars for National Park staff on Natura 2000.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes
No

☐
☒

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

No real consultation has been held.

Information was given in a limited scope to a limited number of participants (present at the gathering of the National Society of Biologists, ca. 50 people).

Note: During the SPA site selection process, Birdlife Hungary (MME) was the major contributor as partner in the PHARE project.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

Birdlife Hungary (MME) was involved during the whole preparation process as a partner in the scientific work (see above). RSPB was also a contributor. However, there is no official process for NGO involvement (consultations, meetings, etc.)

NGO hearings and regular consultations should be organised. The government wants NGOs to play a main role in the communication, but NGOs need to be informed to be able to do so.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Overall: the nation-wide data collection in the framework of the PHARE project revealed sufficient information to assist the list-preparation process. (In comparison with present EU member states and most other candidate countries, Hungary is one of the leading countries regarding this issue). A methodology exists for feeding in the new updated data, but currently there is no specific project for further surveillance.

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

...

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, what is being left out of their analysis? Please give examples.

The time frame of the project did not allow for a complete survey, therefore, gaps and outdated information exist at some points. In some cases, data collection was done on a voluntary basis without financial compensation.

Some experts have raised concerns about the thoroughness of the processing of existing data.

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

National Biodiversity Monitoring Programme is ongoing with focus on Habitats Directive species.

Other ongoing scientific programmes could also contribute to more data on Habitat Directive species and habitats (e.g. survey of mires and sodic lakes, CORINE biotopes, CORINE land cover mapping).

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE....)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

Source	5+1 LIFE projects running in Hungary	Amount €
Description		
Funding the base of long term large carnivore conservation in Hungary (LIFE00 NAT/H/007162). Total Budget: 390 793 € .		
Conservation of aquila heliaca in the Carpathian basin (LIFE02 NAT/H/008627). Total Budget: 585 475 € .		
The practical protection of Angelica palustris habitats (LIFE02 NAT/H/008630). Total Budget: 1 330 000 € .		
Restoration of pannonic steppes, marshes of Hortobágy National Park (LIFE02 NAT/H/008634). Total Budget: 780 744 € .		
Habitat management of Hortobágy eco-region for bird protection (LIFE02 NAT/H/008638). Total Budget: 829 534 € .		
Comments		
+ 1: WWF Tisza LIFE project – officially submitted by WWF Austria, but running entirely in Hungary, Middle-Tisza region: Management of floodplains on the Tisza (LIFE00 NAT/A/007051). Total Budget: 435 326 € .		

Source	PHARE	Amount €
Description		
Phare HU-9807-01-0-02. Preparation for implementation of the Habitats Directive in Hungary.		
Comments		
Closed September 2001.		

Source	PHARE Access Mikro	Amount €
Description		
Birdlife Hungary – Public awareness campaign on the methodology, schedule, possibilities and obligations relating to the establishment of the Hungarian Natura 2000 Network (exhibition material and CD-ROM).		
Comments		
Ongoing until March 2003.		

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

Source	"KAC" Hungarian Central Environmental Fund	Amount €	
Description			
...			
Comments			
3 organisations are running Natura 2000 projects funded by the Central Environmental Fund:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Birdlife Hungary ▪ CEEWEB ▪ MTSVSZ (National Society of Conservationists) 			

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☒

Please comment.

There is no separate national budget for Natura 2000 preparation – it is being done within the national budget for nature protection in general (extra burden on nature protection staff).

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
Some difficulties ☒
No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

The list had to be prepared in a very short time, therefore, despite the thorough research there will be insufficiencies and old data (see questions 6–8).

There is no planning, no co-operation with other policies, as well as no consultation process with civil society and NGOs.

There is no national budget, plan, nor clear time-frame for the implementation of Natura 2000. No process or platform has been established for civil and professional consultations.

Economic interests and lobbies are able to override conservation interests (see the example of Buda Hills), already at the site selection process.

The whole process lacks transparency. The proposed list of sites is treated as “confidential”, and therefore, it is not available for review. The government’s main concern is that early publication of the list can cause damage to them or lead to unfounded complaints. Since no strategy has been developed to handle these upcoming problems, the fear is quite justified.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plan or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please specify most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...).

Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB...).

Drava River – Danube-Drava National Park / Croatian Hydro-power dam project; funding is unknown.

Buda Hills Landscape Protection Area – constant development projects of Hungarian and international investors.

Szatmár-Bereg Landscape protection area (future National Park) – M3 motorway project (as part of the Helsinki corridor); possible EU funding.

Hernád-valley/gravel-excavation projects.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please give details.

Missing legal instruments concerning the implementation of the Nature Conservation Law (1996), e.g.:

1. Ministerial decree on the status and inventory of natural areas
2. Legal instrument on the designation of buffer zones around protected areas
3. Ministerial decree on the designation of ecological corridors and network
4. Indirect tools for conserving and managing natural areas through rural development and agriculture.

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☒
No ☐

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☒
No ☐

There are serious problems since there is no reference to Natura 2000 in other major policy documents and development plans.

No collaboration between ministries, minimal (close to no) awareness of Natura 2000 in other sectors.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	Insufficient
At national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please, give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what are the main problems and which actions are required to address them.

Nature conservation professionals at National Parks have been informed through workshops, but the information flow is not sufficient. In several cases, new people taking over the tasks have not been adequately prepared or informed.

Information has not reached outside the nature conservation sector.

New initiatives coming from NGOs (such as members of the Natura 2000 working group) will significantly contribute to awareness raising (see next question).

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the Government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

2001:

The Environmental Ministry has produced a general brochure on Natura 2000.

Birdlife Hungary produced a brochure and postcards with similar content. These publications helped raise awareness on the national level, but not at the local level.

2002:

Birdlife Hungary (MME): exhibition and CD ROM – recently opened.

Birdlife Hungary (MME): regional seminars on conservation and rural development.

National Association of Conservationists (MTVSZ): Natura 2000 trainings for local NGOs.

WWF: conference (conservationists + stakeholder groups), publications on special issues (socio-economic benefits, legal aspects).

2003:

WWF-MME: Conference on financing Natura 2000.

CEEWEB: study on German experience with Natura 2000.

WWF: Natura 2000 poster (and exhibition material?).

MTVSZ: Natura 2000 model projects.

CEEWEB: Civil coordination office (to facilitate information exchange between EHF and other NGOs).

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

Government/ Ministry should disseminate information on their plans, state of implementation, etc. on which NGOs can base their work. In general, a more cooperative approach is needed.

Ideally, an NGO contact person should be employed at every National Park to maintain the flow of information.

A consultation process or platform should be established with NGOs, stakeholder groups and local stakeholders.

Key actors are the government, Ministry of Environment and Water, local governments, other sectoral ministries and administrative bodies. Farmer organisations, landowners land users, hunters, and fishermen should also be involved.

Conclusions

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Concrete action plan for the implementation of Natura 2000, financial analysis (including economic and social costs/benefits), and national budget created.
2. Dissemination of existing information including the above-mentioned plan and budget, proposed list made public – transparency is key.
3. Intensive and targeted awareness-raising on the national level towards other sectors, stakeholder groups, local governments, etc.
4. Strengthen the role of NGOs (not only in communications, but as “watchdogs” and scientific contributors as well), local governments. Strengthen institutional capacity within the Ministry of Environment, National Parks and other relevant governmental institutions, recruitment.
5. Update scientific data; further surveys on species and habitats contained in the Habitats Directive; Conduct Strategic Environmental Assessments.

MALTA

Compiled by: Vincent Attard, Nature Trust (Malta).

December 2002

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation Process

1) Who is in charge of preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

The Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA).

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

Habitat data have been compiled; some final survey work is still ongoing. A draft list is to be discussed with the Emerald Network/Natura 2000 steering committee set up by the Environment Protection Directorate of MEPA. The draft list is to be published under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act and will be subject to public consultation. A draft list of pSCI and Natura 2000 sites (terrestrial and marine) will be ready by the end of 2002.

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

A detailed ecological survey has been completed over the past 10 years for the entire area of all islands. A complete terrestrial habitats map has been compiled and digitized in a Geographic Information System (GIS). Some marine areas (candidate Marine Conservation Areas) have also been surveyed and digitised. A baseline survey of Posidonia oceanica in territorial waters has been commissioned and is expected to be ready by mid October. Further species studies are ongoing (bats, insects, alien flora), others to commence shortly. Final survey work in connection with the identification of SCIs and Natura 2000 sites is ongoing. Potential marine Natura 2000 sites and SCIs have been identified preliminarily.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes ☒
No ☐

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

Internal (within the MEPA) consultation is ongoing; currently, consultation is on a scientific level with local experts. Once a preliminary draft list is completed, consultation will be open to the public on a nation-wide level as per provisions of the Environmental Protection Act.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

Details of the work carried out so far are available on the MEPA web page. Anyone can submit proposals. Regular communication is maintained with NGOs. Once a draft list is completed, NGOs will be one of the main consultees in the process leading to the finalisation of the list to be submitted to the European Commission.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

Terrestrial habitat data is sufficient and of a high level.

Marine habitat data is not complete, but for the areas where data collection has been completed it is sufficient. Further information will be available shortly as a result of the Posidonia oceanica survey.

Species data is lacking for a number of groups. However, a number of studies are either currently ongoing or are planned.

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, what is being left out of their analysis? Please give examples.

...

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

Various surveys and studies are currently ongoing or planned for the coming months. See above.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

...

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...)

Yes ☐
No ☒

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

...

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Please comment.

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
Some difficulties ☐
No difficulties ☒

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plan or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If yes, please specify most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...). Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB...).

...

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please give details.

Annex I, II, IV and V still to be transposed. These are to be transposed (together with the technical amendments) by end 2002

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please give details.

The Habitats Directive will be completely transposed by the end of 2002.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☒
No ☐

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	Insufficient
At national level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

But not to the expected level.

Please, give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what the main problems are and which actions are required to address them.

Most people are not even aware at the local and regional level what Natura 2000 is!

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

MEPA in partnership with NGOs is working for the protection of ecologically important sites.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

An educational awareness-raising campaign is badly needed. The media can be used effectively. Unfortunately, due to the lack of funds and human resources, this is not possible. As Nature Trust, we are embarking on a mobile exhibition in schools to increase environmental awareness of Natura 2000 sites.

Conclusions

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Education.
2. Public participation.
3. NGOs and other stakeholder involvement.
4. Commitment and funding from the authorities.
5. Law enforcement.

POLAND

Compiled by: Inga Kolomyjska, Katarzyna Nowak WWF Poland
January 2003

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation process

1) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

The national authority responsible for submission of the official list of pSCI to the European Commission is the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry of Environment sub-contracted preparation of the list of Natura 2000 sites to the Polish National Foundation for Environmental Protection. The National Foundation of Environmental Protection is responsible for co-ordination of the whole process at central and regional (Voivodship) levels. At the Voivodship level, working groups (pol. WZR – Voivodship Realisation Teams) have been established.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

Submission of the Official List of pSCI (Habitats Directive) to the European Commission is foreseen after the day of accession. The Ministry of Environment has planned to send the list of sites for the Birds Directive to the European Commission in 2003.

The National Foundation for Environmental Protection sent the draft list of pSCI to the Ministry of Environment in December 2002. The preliminary official list of pSCI and the cartographic data will be verified at the Voivodship level and open to the public. The end of this phase is planned to be in March 2003 and until this date, it is possible to submit any comments and suggestions to Nature Conservators of Voivodships and to the Ministry of Environment. The Foundation of Environmental Protection will have to deliver the final proposal of pSCI to the Ministry of Environment by March 2003. If any extra money will be available, the Ministry plans to verify the list delivered by the National Foundation of Environmental Protection.

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

Present activities are based on the preliminary list of sites that was prepared in the framework of PHARE project PL 9608.01.04 – conception of NATURA 2000 network in Poland. This first proposal of sites was far from sufficient. Regional authorities were not consulted with and it was mainly based on CORINE Biotopes.

At the Voivodship level, there are working groups (Polish: WZR – the Voivodship Realisation Teams). The main tasks of the WZR are to verify the preliminary list of sites which were prepared on the basis of CORINE Biotopes, to update existing data or add new data if available, and to send the completed standard data form to the National Foundation of Environmental Protection. In the

Ministry of Environment one person was appointed in the year 2000 to coordinate the establishment of the Natura 2000 network in Poland.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes ☒
No ☐

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

At the stage of preparation of preliminary official list of pSCI on the Voivodship level (Polish: WZR – the Voivodship Realisation Teams), each working group should include one person from NGOs. This gives give an opportunity for NGOs to express an opinion and to contribute to the site identification with their delivery data (when available). The cooperation between NGOs and WZRs varies among individual Voivodships.

At the central level, public consultation is foreseen by the Ministry of Environment on the Voivodship level to be in January – February. The first meeting has already taken place in Mazowsze Voivodship Council in mid January.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform)

At the Voivodship level, one NGO representative should be invited to participate in the working group (WZR). It gives the opportunity for NGOs to express their opinions and contribute data.

The situation however differs from one region to another. In some Voivodships, co-operation has been good (e.g. Dolnośląskie Voivodship), while in others it has been unsatisfactory. (e.g. in Podlaskie Voivodship WZR, NGO input has not been considered.) During the consultation process in the second stage of the list's verification, NGOs are asked to be active participants and submit the written comments and statements to the Ministry of Environmental Protection. However, it is difficult to obtain the cartographic data before the meeting in the Voivodship Council.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

In the opinion of staff from the Ministry of Environment, the available data is not complete. Information that has been used has come mainly from a preliminary list of sites that was prepared as part of PHARE project PL 9608.01.04 – Conception of NATURA 2000 network in Poland. This first proposal of sites (based on CORINE Biotopes) was based mainly on theoretical information and was not developed in consultation with regional authorities. In the opinion of some decision makers and scientists, complete information should be based on field surveys.

It is very difficult for experts to specify which information on species or habitats is missing. The government has not completed a practical scientific investigation. There is some general data, some of it dating back to the 1960s. The main problem is the lack of detailed data of good quality for some regions of Poland. During the verification process of the Preliminary Official List of pSCI from the Ministry of Environment, it is important to check which protected areas (and their special extension) for Natura 2000, which have been already indicated in the first phase, are missing. That will be possible as soon as NGO's get the cartographic data attached to the list.

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If not, what is being left out of their analysis? Please give examples.

...

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

The Ministry of Environment is planning to verify the proposal delivered by the National Foundation in 2003, provided that some money will be available from the state budget for that purpose.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

Source	PHARE 2001	Amount €	1 900 000
Description			
Twinning project Implementation of NATURA 2000 between the Polish Ministry of Environment and the French administration – Regional National Parks of France.			
Comments			
The project began at the end of December 2002.			

Source	PHARE Access	Amount €	129 794
Description			
Nature Protection in Transboundary Natura 2000 Sites in Czech Republic and Neighbouring Countries through Network of NGOs. It is transboundary project between Czech, Slovak, Polish NGOs, Auen Institut, Germany and Danish Society for Nature Conservation. The project was submitted to the European Commission by the Czech NGO Arnika.			
Comments			
WWF is included in the project as the expert organization for Odra River meanders subproject (From the total project budget of 129 794 € about 10 000 € is intended for realization of this subproject).			

Source	PHARE Access	Amount €	35 381
Description			
Identification of Natura 2000 sites in the Odra valley.			
Comments			
The project was submitted to the European Commission by the Lower-Silesian Eco-Development Foundation with WWF as a partner organization. The project will be finished in 2002.			

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...)?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☒

Please comment.

The budget for present activities for the whole territory of Poland is ca. 200,000.00 PLN (ca.50 000 €). This is entirely inadequate for the work that needs to be done.

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
Some difficulties ☒
No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

The national government gives no priority to Natura 2000.

In the administration, there is not enough staff at local and especially at the central (national) level.

The general opinion in the administration is that Natura 2000 will be very costly and the tendency is to include areas that are as small as possible in order to reduce potential costs.

There is insufficient knowledge and understanding of Natura 2000 among civil servants. Training and support is urgently needed.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plan or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please specify most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...). Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB ...).

There are plans to locate the Via-Baltica highway through Biebrza National Park. This project will probably be financed by the national budget and ISPA pre-accession fund and/or Structural Funds.

There are plans to build a Danube-Oder-Elbe canal and finance it by the national budget as well as possible from EU sources.

Oder 2006 investment plan – further river regulation started by building of Malczyce dam on Odra river, as part of a future dam cascade on the river. The project will probably be financed by the national budget as well as ISPA pre-accession fund and/or Structural Funds.

Both the Danube-Oder-Elbe canal and Oder 2006 investment plan would threaten at least 26 potential Natura 2000 sites on the Polish side and at least 2 sites on the Czech side of the border.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive into national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
No ☐

In the Law on Nature Conservation, some gaps have been identified, e.g. there is no definition of Sites of Community Importance in Polish legislation – so practically no process connected with this term can be realized.

Also, in relation to the Law on Environmental Protection, there are some doubts as to whether it covers all the provisions of the text of the Directive.

In some executing legislation resulting from the binding Hunting Law, changes should be made to fulfill the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☒
No ☐

At present, the Ministry of Environment is preparing a project for the amendment of the Law on Nature Conservation. It should cover existing gaps. The project is planned to leave inter-ministerial consultations at the end of October/beginning of November 2002 and to be submitted to Parliament in 2003.

The Ministry of Environment states that those regulations resulting from the binding Hunting Law will be changed together with amending the Law on Nature Protection to fulfill the requirements of the Habitats Directive. This is planned for the end of 2002.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☐
No ☒

There is no integration of Natura 2000 into sectoral policies. There is no clear connection to agriculture nor rural development policy. There are no regular consultations or meetings of officers of the Ministry of Environment with decision-makers responsible for the transportation.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

Adequate Insufficient

At national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what are the main problems and which actions are required to address them.

No activities to promote Natura 2000 have been undertaken by the government to date. The level of awareness of Natura 2000 among civil servants, at central and especially at the local level, is very low. No informational campaigns have been carried out in Poland.

Some stakeholders have already expressed their ambivalence toward Natura 2000, e.g. State Forest Administration.

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

In the framework of the planned PHARE 2001 Twinning project "Implementation of NATURA 2000", between the Polish Ministry of Environment and French Administration of Regional National Parks in France, meetings with local stakeholders at the level of Voivodship (farmers, local level administration, foresters) are foreseen.

Some Polish NGOs (e.g. Lower-Silesian Eco-Development Foundation in co-operation with WWF, Lubuski Naturalist Club) have done some publications or published information on Natura 2000 on their websites.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

It is necessary to carry out a national campaign to raise awareness of Natura 2000 as soon as possible.

The Promotion and Information Office at the Ministry of Environment should initiate and be involved in the informational campaigns on Natura 2000. It should also inform all relevant administrative bodies about Natura 2000.

It is extremely important to build awareness among central, regional and local administrations, farmers (farmers' organisations), foresters, land owners and users, hunter organisations, and the general public.

Conclusions

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Complete scientific information on natural resources based on field surveys (this is also the opinion of Ministerial and scientific experts). It is especially necessary for marine areas.
2. Increase staff capacity of relevant public administrations at central and local levels to carry out the Natura 2000 process.
3. Information campaigns to build awareness of Natura 2000 among all relevant stakeholders at the central and local levels (farmers' organisations, foresters, landowners and users – hunters/fisheries organisations, general public).
4. Awareness-raising campaigns/education/training targeted at civil servants at central, regional and local levels.
5. Co-operation in the field of Natura 2000 between the various economic sectors is necessary. There is great need for the integration of Natura 2000 requirements into sectoral policies (in particular agriculture, spatial planning, transportation development, rural and regional development, fisheries policy).

ROMANIA

Compiled by: Carmen Damian, Romanian Ministry of Water and Environmental Protection, and Sevastel Mircea, WWF Danube Carpathian Programme (Romania).

Date: October 2002

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation process

1) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

Ministry of Waters and Environmental Protection.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

A partial list will be submitted to the European Commission in 2005 and it will be completed by the date of accession (presently projected for 2007).

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

Habitats and species identification in accordance with Directive 92/43 and 79/409 has started. Development in Romania of the EMERALD project in the framework with the Bern Convention.

4) Has any consultation been organized?

Yes ☒
No ☐

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

“EMERALD Working Committee” has been set up at national level.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

NGOs will be involved in the Natura 2000 preparation process through regular consultations and meetings held by MWEP.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

Complete information regarding all types of habitats listed on Annex I of Directive 92/43 CEE are missing. There is insufficient data regarding the species populations status listed in the Directives' Annexes.

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☒
No ☐

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organizations are trying to fill these gaps.

Inventory studies, financed from the Ministry of Water and Environment Protection budget and development of projects, is financed through external sources.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

2000 PHARE CBC RO/BG Programme

Priority / Project Title	Total (€)	PHARE (€)	National (€)
Greening of Danube and Transportation Facilities.	3 730 000	2 800 000	930 000

Project beneficiary:

- Ministry of Waters and Environmental Protection and Ministry of Public Works, Transports and Housing.

Specific objectives:

- Improvements on environmental protection along the boundary area by decreasing pollution risk and supporting sustainable harvesting of the natural marine resources of the Black Sea.

2001 PHARE CBC RO/BG Programme

Priority / Project Title	Total (€)	PHARE (€)	National (€)
1. Integrated monitoring of the Romanian Black Sea Coast between Midia – Vama Veche. Project beneficiary : Ministry of Waters and Environmental Protection and National Company of Romanian Waters. Specific objectives: • Protection of the Black Sea littoral patrimony through the prevention and control of marine water pollution. • Initiate cross-border co-operation for the preservation of the Black Sea littoral.	2 930 000	2 200 000	730 000
2. Protection of Danube wetlands – a pilot project for Cama Dinu and Liuliak islets area. Project beneficiary : Ministry of Waters and Environmental Protection and Environmental Protection Inspectorate in Giurgiu county. Specific objectives: • Implementation of policy framework on the environmental management of the Danube River. • As a pilot project, preservation of Cama Dinu islet area.	2 660 000	660 000	2 000 000

LIFE

- Integrated management plan for “Insula Mica a Brailei”.
- Iron gates Natural Park-habitat conservation and management.
- In situ conservation of the Romanian Meadow Viper-“vipera ursini”.

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...)?

Yes ☐
No ☒

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☒

Please comment.

The establishment of the Natura 2000 network in Romania is supported mainly through the LIFE EU funding programme (about 75% of the total amount needed). The remainder comes from budget of the MWEF, which is still inadequate for the moment.

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☒
 Some difficulties ☐
 No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

Economic difficulties; too few adequately qualified human resources; not enough time.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plan or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☐
 No ☒

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☐
 No ☐

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☐
 No ☐

If yes, please give details.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☐
 No ☒

No difficulties concerning Natura 2000 were discovered because the Natura 2000 sites have still not been designated.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarize the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	Insufficient
At national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please, give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what the main problems are and which actions are required to address them.

Lack of financial support for the production of informative materials; lack of adequate personnel.

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realized activities of the Government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

LIFE-Natura 2000 seminars.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

Government level – involved Ministries (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Public Works, Transports and Houses).

Local level – Environmental Protection Inspectorates, universities, NGOs, general public.

Conclusions

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Inventory.
2. Qualified personnel in sufficient number.
3. Correct filling of the data forms.
4. Achievement of the targets established through the management plans.
5. Monitoring.

SLOVAKIA

Compiled by: Eva Viestová, DAPHNE, Institute of Applied Ecology.

December 2002 .

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation process

1) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

The Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic – Department of Nature and Landscape Protection – has the main responsibility for the preparation of the list, together with the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic; budgetary organisation directed by the Ministry.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to European Commission)?

2000 – first conference on Natura 2000 for experts was organised; amendments of the Annexes (Habitats and Birds Directives) were prepared.

2001 – detailed mapping of Slovakia started. First informational material for the broad public was disseminated. Conference on LIFE Program was organised by DAPHNE and Ministry of Environment in June 2001.

2002 – preparation of the Act on Nature and Landscape Protection, adjusted to the European Directives (Habitats and Birds Directives) adopted by Parliament; finalisation of the proposed list of SPA areas; collection of data for habitats and species and preparation of the first pre-selection lists of pSAC; expert conference was organised with the aim to discuss all relevant data on annex species and habitats.

2003 – the Act on Nature and Landscape Protection will enter into force in January 2003. Correction of the borders for SPA areas (till February). Presentation of the list of nominated SPA areas to the various ministries (March). Discussion with the stakeholders in nominated and approved SPA areas (August-September). Preparation and discussion of binding regulations connected with SPA areas (August-November). Filling of the standard data formulae for SPA areas (March-November). Final national list of SPA areas to the EC (December). Sending of the binding regulations to the EC (January 2004). Analysis of the data for pSAC (January-February). Correction of the borders for pSAC areas (March-May). Preparation of the nomination list of pSAC and discussions with stakeholders in nominated pSAC areas (June-August). Discussions with various ministries and present the list of nominated pSAC to the Government of the Slovak Republic (November). Filling out of the standard data formulae for pSAC areas (March-November). Sending of the nominated list and binding regulations to the European Commission (December-January 2004).

2004 through 2010 – Designation of the nominated areas as protected areas in accordance to the Act on Nature and Landscape Protection; monitoring of the areas; reporting.

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

In 2000, a new organisation was established: the State Nature Conservancy (the Slovak Environmental Agency was divided into two separate organisations). The number of employees as well as the budget of the State Nature Conservancy has increased during 2000 to 2002, and will hopefully continue to increase in the future.

Government and Parliament approved the new Act on Nature and Landscape Protection in June 2002 to transpose the Habitats and Birds Directives. It will enter into force in January 2003.

The government also approved the entrance of the Slovak Republic into the EU's LIFE Programme, and first projects for LIFE-Nature were submitted in September 2002.

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes

☒

No

☐

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

2000 – first national conference for experts in nature and landscape protection was organised, also representatives of EC participated there. The conference was organised by the Ministry of Environment, DAPHNE and WWF. The first informational materials for experts were prepared.

2001 – national conference on the LIFE Programme was organised, again by the organisations mentioned above.

2002 – March, the first national conference for stakeholders was organised by the consortium of 10 organisations involved in the MATRA Pre-Accession Program Project “Establishment of the Natura 2000 Network in the Slovak Republic” and the Ministry of Environment. November – national conference for experts was organised through the already mentioned MATRA project and through the DANCEE project “Conservation and Sustainable Use of Peatlands in Slovakia”. The goal of the conference was to discuss data from the mapping of annex habitats and species and their distribution within protected areas. According to the approved new Act on Nature and Landscape Protection, several expert meetings with employees of the State Nature Conservancy, regional and district offices were organised.

2003 – DAPHNE will organise, with financial support of WWF, another big conference focused on the needs concerning the establishment of the Natura 2000 network in Slovakia.

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes

☒

No

☐

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

Several NGOs are very closely involved in the process of preparing for Natura 2000 Slovakia. All nature and landscape protection oriented NGOs had the opportunity to comment on the preparation of the new Act on Nature and Landscape Protection. DAPHNE and the Slovak Society for Protection of Birds in Slovakia (SOVS), in particular, have been very active participants in the whole process.

NGOs are also actively involved in the preparation of the official lists for nomination of SPA areas and pSAC areas. SOVS, together with the Society for Protection and Research of Owls and Birds of Prey (SVODAS), are working on the list of SPA areas and DAPHNE is working on the list of pSAC areas.

There is very good co-operation between NGOs and the Slovak Ministry of Environment and State Nature Conservancy, thanks also to the ongoing conferences and meetings. Preparation of information and expert materials involve experts from both sides. Some NGOs receive financial support from the Ministry of Environment for the preparation process of Natura 2000 in Slovakia.

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

As part of the preparations for Natura 2000 in Slovakia, a review was made of all existing databases connected with species and habitats in Slovakia. It appeared that some databases are insufficient and not filled with relevant data.

Species – it is necessary to finish the mapping for birds and their habitats (20-30%), partly to finalise the mapping of plant species from Annexes II and IV of Habitats Directive (25%), and further detailed mapping of animal species from Annexes II and IV of Habitats Directive is needed – mostly missing data (50-60%).

Habitats – complete mapping of all habitats from Annex I of Habitats Directive; finalise the mapping of peatlands (20-40 %); finalise the mapping of non-forest habitats (60-80%), and correct and complete the data on forest habitats.

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, what is being left out of their analysis? Please give examples.

Experts from the State Nature Conservancy are also using data from the databases of the Ministry of Agriculture, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Faculty of Natural Sciences, and others.

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

The Ministry of Environment financed the acquisition of some data (on forest habitats and hunting species) from the Forestry Research Institute for the Natura 2000 meta-database in the State Nature Conservancy.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE....)?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

...

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

Source	DANCEE	Amount €	672 900
Description			
Protection and sustainable use of peatlands in Slovakia – the project aims to establish a basis for the long-term conservation of the international important biodiversity values of Slovakian peatlands, to achieve an overview of prevailing resources, threats and needs, and further to prepare recommended improvements on legislation.			
Three main objectives have been identified:			
1. National Peatland Inventory.			
2. Six areas, including all types of mires have been selected to ensure long-term protection of biodiversity values.			
3. Awareness-raising on biodiversity and other important values and functions of mires.			
Comments			
Mapping of the peatland habitats is part of the overall mapping for Natura 2000 network.			

Source	Matra Pre-Accession Project Programme	Amount €	290 420
Description			
Establishment of the Natura 2000 Network in Slovakia – the project framework includes a broad spectrum of activities, which will help Slovakia to fulfil one of the most difficult tasks of the EU accession process – the creation of a network of protected areas called Natura 2000.			
The aims of the projects are:			
1. Evaluation of current databases, their access and use, analyses of other existing informational sources important for establishment of a Natura 2000 network.			
2. Preparation of methodologies for site selection on the basis of evaluating existing methodologies of EU -membered states.			
3. Preparation and printing of an interpretation manual of habitats from Annex I of Habitats Directive.			
4. Development of a central database with all necessary files, which describe identified localities.			
Comments			
Project is a “kicking out” step for further work on preparation of Natura 2000 network in Slovakia.			

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please comment.

In the past, some very important steps were made to increase the budget of the State Nature Conservancy for Natura 2000 tasks, but the increase of the budget is still not sufficient. Due to the financial assessment for Natura 2000 that was conducted as part of the project "Approximation strategy for EU environmental legislation in Slovakia", approximately 155 million SKK are needed per year (ca. 3.690 million € per year), i.e. for 35 years about 5441.8 million SKK (129.6 million €).

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
 Some difficulties ☒
 No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

If the preparation process proceeds as foreseen in the government document "Process of the establishment of Natura 2000 in Slovakia", and all the relevant institutions and organisations will be actively involved, it should run smoothly. Work during 2003 will be very intense and will be crucial for the success of the process. Some difficulties are expected in discussions with various ministries and stakeholders.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plan or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
 No ☐

If yes, please specify most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...).

Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB ...).

Morava River floodplains – most damaging projects relate to the development of the Danube-Oder-Elbe canal and the construction of two bridges at Hohenau-Moravsky Jan and at Marchegg. Slovak construction and traffic companies are feeling strong pressure from business interests to push large-scale industrial projects forward, which will have a cross-border impact.

High and Low Tatra National Parks – the idea for the preparation of the Olympic games in these two national parks has been going on for several years. New sport facilities and construction would have to be built, causing irreparable damage to habitats and species of the two national parks. Fortunately, there is still a lack of money for actual implementation of the project.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
 No ☐

If yes, please give details.

A new Act on Nature and Landscape Protection was prepared and approved by the Government in 2002 to transpose both Directives into national legislation. The Act will be valid from January 2003 and several other binding regulations should be adopted by this date. It is possible that when the Act goes into effect, the Ministry of Environment, together with State Nature Conservancy and regional and district offices, will find more gaps in the Act. There may be some misunderstandings connected with new obligations for investors and with regard to provisions for Environmental Impact Assessments. There are important discrepancies between two important acts – the Act on Nature and Landscape Protection (more management oriented towards conservation of forests) and the Act on Forests (different management goals and tools, strong orientation toward economically profitable management of forests). These acts are contradictory and need to be harmonised.

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☒
 No ☐

Please give details.

The government, in its annual plan, controls the fulfilment of the tasks connected with the entering of the Slovak Republic into the EU. The establishment of Natura 2000 is one of the environmental preconditions. The biggest discrepancies are between the already mentioned acts – Act on Nature and Landscape Protection and Act on Forests. A new Act on forests should be prepared in near future to address the gaps between these two important fields.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☒
 No ☐

Agriculture and rural development – The Ministry of Environment made a big step towards the Ministry of Agriculture in connection with hunters and their legislation, where most of the problematic hunting species were discussed (bear, wolf, lynx, some bird species); legislation was harmonised (new Act on Hunting should be prepared in near future). In the SAPARD pre-accession fund, some agri-environmental schemes will exist, but they are still under preparation, so details about their proper use are still unknown.

Spatial planning and regional development – the Act on Territorial Planning and Construction was amended in the year 2000. In planning construction, it is now obligatory to use the relevant management plans for protected sites. For development of regions and districts, it is obligatory to use also other documents regarding nature and landscape protection. In the Act on Environmental Impact Assessment, both intention and evaluation documents should include expected impacts on landscape and nature protection without any restriction in protected sites, and partial restriction in the first level of protection (all of Slovakia is in the first level of protection). There are also areas with several restrictions for nature protection. The same holds for the amendment on the Act on Environmental Impact Assessment.

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	(Totally) Insufficient
At national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please, give example to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what the main problems are and which actions are required to address them.

At national level – three national conferences have been organised for Natura 2000 (two for experts and one for stakeholders), and only a few brochures have been disseminated to the public. We feel that this is not enough. We need a campaign with TV and/or radio spots as well as articles on Natura 2000 in public media to explain what Natura 2000 implies and to avoid misunderstandings and fears.

At regional level – Until now, there have been no workshops or seminars on Natura 2000 for regional authorities. The situation may change after the seminars and workshops concerning the new Act on Nature and Landscape Protection are held, where more details will be explained on the new paragraphs connected with the transposition of the Habitats and Birds Directives.

At local level – there have been several meetings with stakeholders in areas where the development of management plans is ongoing (10 pilot areas). In 2003, several meetings with local stakeholders are planned in areas which will be nominated as SPA and pSAC areas. DAPHNE is also preparing a trans-border project with the Czech Republic on communication with stakeholders on both sides of the border.

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

The Ministry of Environment prepared three national conferences (in 2000 for conservation experts, in 2002 one for stakeholders and one for experts) on Natura 2000 together with some NGOs – Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology and the Society on Protection of Birds in Slovakia (SOVS). These NGOs and also the Slovak Academy of Sciences and Faculty of Natural Sciences participated together with the Ministry of Environment and State Nature Conservancy in the preparation of the interpretation manual on habitats, leaflets, and postcards on Natura 2000 for the general public and on some other informational material connected with this topic.

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

At present, work on a communications strategy on Natura 2000 is going on. There are plans for preparation of many materials, brochures and meetings for each group of stakeholders (hunters, farmers, fishermen, regional and district offices, representatives in the field of water, defense, agriculture, land owners and land users, investors, NGOs and broad public). All activities will be done in accordance to the available financial budget.

Conclusions

20) In your opinion, which are the 5 priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Properly prepared national meetings and seminars for employees of the State Nature Conservancy as well as the regional and district offices regarding the new act on Nature and Landscape Protection, which will enter into force by January 2003. Explanation of new paragraphs related to the transposition of both directives.
2. Preparation of a professional list for nominated SPA and pSAC areas according to the data available from the overall mapping of the Slovak Republic.
3. The Ministry of Environment should actively explain and discuss the aim of the future Natura 2000 network in Slovakia with other ministries and authorities who are all involved in the whole process to one extent or another.
4. Several meetings and seminars for the local stakeholders in the areas nominated for the network (SPA or pSAC areas); explain all positive and negative influences of Natura 2000.
5. Continue the co-operation between several governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in the whole process of the preparation of the Natura 2000 network not only until the Slovakia's entry into EU, but also in the process following entry into the EU.

SLOVENIA

Compiled by: Hermann Sonntag, WWF Alpine Programme

December 2002

Objective 1: National list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs) are ready by the day of accession.

Preparation process

1) Who is in charge of the preparation of the list? (e.g. Environmental Agency, regional government, Ministry of Environment).

The Slovenian Ministry of Environment is responsible for the process. The Environmental Agency, which is part of the ministry, is collecting the data and preparing the official list of sites.

2) Which timing has been foreseen in order to ensure that the official list of pSCI will be ready by the day of accession (date for scientific list, time for consultations of various ministries, other consultations, formal submission to the European Commission)?

March 2003: the first draft of sites should be ready with the main gaps being addressed. September/October 2003 the final version should be finished.

3) Which steps has your government already taken to have the list of pSCI ready by the day of accession?

The Environmental Agency has involved some scientific institutions to collect data (e.g. fish, mammals, dragonflies, etc.).

4) Has any consultation been organised?

Yes ☒
No ☐

At which level (local, regional, national)? Please give some details, including the consultations that are planned when none have been undertaken yet.

Some scientific institutions have been contracted to provide support for the data collection. There is a big lack of human resources for the Natura 2000 work in the Environmental Agency. In order to involve more consultants, it is essential that financial resources are made more available. of the

5) Does the preparation process for Natura 2000 list allow NGOs proposals to be taken into account?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If not, why not and what should be changed in the process? If yes, please provide brief explanations on how NGOs are involved in the preparation process (consultations, regular meetings, Natura 2000 platform).

DOPPS (Birdlife Slovenia) prepared a comprehensive and well elaborated proposal of Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Concerning the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) process, NGOs are only partly involved in the first phase of site identification (until March 2003). They should be more involved in the stage of evaluating the draft proposal (March 2003-September 2003).

Availability of scientific information

6) Is there sufficient scientific information to inform the list-preparation process?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If not, for which species (or group of species)/habitat types is the information particularly missing? Please give examples.

For some taxa the information is very incomplete (e.g. butterflies, fish).

7) If yes, is your government using all available scientific information to prepare their Natura 2000 lists?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If not, what is being left out of their analysis? Please give examples.

We do not know.

8) If there are gaps in the available information, is your government doing anything to fill these?

Yes ☒
No ☐

Please explain briefly what is being undertaken to fill these gaps, including which (if any) other organisations are trying to fill these gaps.

Theoretically, the agency will try to address the gaps and fill them after the first proposal (March 2003). In practise, there is a big lack of human and financial resources.

NGOs trying to fill the gaps:

- Local NGOs, which have data for different taxa.
- WWF – information collected for Natura 2000 Shadow List will be provided to the Environmental Agency.

Objective 2: Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

9) Are there any projects for the establishment of Natura 2000 in your country that are supported by the EU funding programmes (LIFE, PHARE...)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have information on any of these funding sources, please give a brief description in the box below.

Source	LIFE	Amount €	470 200
Description	Peatbogs in Triglav National Park.2001–2003.		
Comments	LIFE contribution 75%.		

Source	LIFE	Amount €	275 000
Description			
Management Plan and Urgent Actions for Veternik and Oslica High Dry Meadows. 2001–2004.			
Comments			
LIFE contribution 75%.			

Source	LIFE	Amount €	581 869
Description			
Restoring and conserving habitats and birds in Skocjanski Zatok. 2001–2004.			
Comments			
LIFE contribution 50%.			

Source	LIFE	Amount €	476 930
Description			
Conservation of endangered habitats/species in the future Karst Park. 2002–2005.			
Comments			
LIFE contribution 75%.			

Source	LIFE	Amount €	607 822
Description			
Conservation of large Carnivores in Slovenia Phase 1. 2002–2005.			
Comments			
LIFE contribution 75%.			

Source	PHARE small Projects Programme	Amount €	~ 60 000
Description			
Generating public support for European integration in field of nature conservation in Slovenia – promoting SPAs and Bird directive; lead by DOPPS.			
Comments			
Starting autumn 2002; PHARE contribution 80%.			

10) Are there any Natura 2000 projects supported by other sources? (e.g. DANCEE, DfID, private foundations...).

Yes ☒
No ☐

If available, please include the funding source, the amount of support, and a brief description of the project.

Source	RSPB	Amount €	
Description			
Contribution to DOPPS activities on Natura 2000.			
Comments			
Cooperation is taking place now for already 4 years.			

11) Is the national budget for the preparation of Natura 2000 adequate?

Yes ☐
No ☒

Please comment.

Very inadequate – very limited funding is available for the SAC proposal, and nothing for communication.

12) In summary, at this stage of the process, do you foresee any difficulties in the production of an adequate list of pSCI by the day of accession?

Many difficulties ☐
Some difficulties ☒
No difficulties ☐

Please illustrate your answer with brief examples of main difficulties or promising steps.

Lack of information on several taxon groups/habitat types.

Lack of information on how Natura 2000 “works” – it takes a long time to understand the provisions.

Capacity of administration: not enough human and financial resources to work on the main Natura 2000 issues; e.g. no activities on communication, which in turn causes serious difficulties.

Objective 3: Ensure that no plans or projects threaten any potential Natura 2000 sites

13) Are you aware of any plan or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If yes, please specify most important ones, including location (which possible Natura 2000 sites are threatened?) and nature of threat (e.g. highway, canal...).

Indicate if there are any EU funds involved or planned (ISPA, PHARE, EIB ...).

- Some large infrastructure plans in Slovenia (roads, railways), e.g. highway threatening “Kraski rob” – potential Natura 2000 site; enlargement of an airport near the site “Secovlje”.
- Energy sector: dams – “HE Moste II” on the Sava Dolinka river – a potential Natura 2000 site.
- Windpower-fields: some 85 wind turbines on Mt. Golik on Kras (Carst)-proposed SPA, the biggest dry grassland in Slovenia: many rare large raptors, several endemic insect and plant species.

Objective 4: Transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation.

14) Are there any gaps in the transposition of the Habitats Directive in national legislation?

Yes ☒
No ☐

15) Is the government taking measures to address these gaps?

Yes ☒
No ☐

It seems that the government is willing to transpose both directives. Some problems could arise due to lack of manpower in the ministry dealing with the legal transposition.

16) Are there any gaps/problems regarding the integration of Natura 2000 requirements in sectoral policies? If yes, which policies in particular? (agriculture, spatial planning, transport developments, rural development, fisheries policy, regional development).

Yes ☒
No ☐

There are tremendous problems. In addition to the insufficient manpower in the Ministry of Environment, the co-operation between ministries is limited. In other ministries, there are only a few officials who have heard about Natura 2000. There will be some problems with the integration of Natura 2000 in land use policies (see threatening projects).

Objective 5: Information and awareness on Natura 2000

17) How would you summarise the level of awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 amongst key political, economic and civil society stakeholders in your country (e.g. local and regional governments, farmers organisations, landowners, land users, hunters, fishermen, other NGOs)? Please consider differences at national, regional and local levels and provide any useful examples that highlight particular problems.

	Adequate	(Totally) Insufficient
At national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please, give examples to justify your answer. If the level is insufficient, please explain what the main problems are and which actions are required to address them.

Hardly anything has been done to promote knowledge of Natura 2000 among the general public and local governments. At all levels of institutions, there is a lack of information. There have been some workshops for the public, but with few participants. A communications strategy has now been developed by the communications department of the Ministry of Environment and should go into action in spring 2003.

DOPPS has carried out a few dozen lectures for members, the general public, and government officials on SPAs and the Birds Directive, but according to DOPPS, this is not sufficient. DOPPS has now begun a new PHARE project on Natura 2000 and communication.

18) Please indicate ongoing or already realised activities of the government, NGOs, or other actors to promote Natura 2000 in your country.

...

19) Which actions should be undertaken to raise the level of awareness and understanding on Natura 2000 in your country? Who are the key actors?

Professional campaigns together with professional consultants to bring Natura 2000 closer to the people and institutions.

Conclusions

20) In your opinion, which are the priority actions to be undertaken for a proper establishment of Natura 2000 in your country?

1. Preparation of the SACs list in close co-ordination with NGOs.
2. Parallel to this, launch a communications campaign on Natura 2000 with involvement of stakeholders and NGOs.
3. Consequently, it is absolutely necessary to have more human and financial resources for Natura 2000 in Slovenia.