



# Natura 2000 in the New EU Member States



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Federation of Ecological  
and Environmental  
Organisations in Cyprus

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ELF



Nature Trust (Malta)



Slovenian Society  
for Bird Research  
and Nature Protection

## Status report and list of sites for selected habitats and species

Covering the Czech Republic, Hungary,  
Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia,  
and Slovenia, and with status reports  
for Cyprus, Estonia and Latvia  
as well as Bulgaria and Romania

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## I. Introduction

### Natura 2000:

#### Stretching the safety net for nature across the new EU Member States

In 1992, in response to the significant and ongoing deterioration of many habitat types and the growing number of threatened or rare 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 setting up a European wide network of protected areas called Natura 2000 and by protecting threatened species in their natural range. It 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. The sites 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 existing 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 led 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 at the beginning to involve nongovernmental organisations (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 quite complete, existing and proposed sites already represent some 18% of the Union's territory (approximately 60 million hectares).

Implementation of Natura 2000 in the marine environment is still lagging behind, especially as regards offshore areas. The Natura 2000 European Marine Expert Working Group established in 2003, is considering aspects of implementation of both directives in the marine environment in order to make concrete proposals to complete the network at sea, including area beyond territorial waters to the limit of the European Exclusive Economic Zone.

## How does Natura 2000 work?

### The Natura 2000 site selection process

The selection of sites to be included in the Natura 2000 network is a shared responsibility between the EU's new Member States and the European Commission. By their date of accession<sup>1</sup>, acceding countries must propose to the European Commission a list of sites (referred to as proposed Sites of Community Importance, or pSCI) to protect those habitats and species listed in the annexes of the Habitats Directive and occurring in their territory. Once these national proposals have been submitted, the Commission should evaluate them in order to adopt a final list of Sites of Community Importance (SCI).

The Natura 2000 site selection process is based on biogeographic regions. The European Union is currently divided into seven biogeographic regions, including the Alpine, Atlantic, Boreal, Continental, Macaronesian, Mediterranean and – added as a result of the present enlargement – Pannonian biogeographic regions. With the future accession of Romania and Bulgaria, two more regions will be added to this list: the Black Sea and the Steppic biogeographic regions. The evaluation of the new Member States proposals should be carried out through a series of seminars for each biogeographic region. In these seminars, representatives from the new Member States, the European Commission, environmental NGOs and independent experts assess whether the areas nominated by the national governments are sufficient and whether together they provide proper protection for all endangered species and habitats within the bio-geographic region concerned

### Ensuring Favourable Conservation Status

The aim of the Habitats Directive is to establish a 'favourable conservation status' for habitat types and species selected as being of Community Importance. Favourable conservation status of habitats and species is defined in Article 1 of the Directive. This is defined broadly for both habitats and species by reference to factors such as species population dynamics, trends in the natural range of species and habitats and the area of habitats remaining.

1) May 1, 2004 for 8 countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia) and Cyprus and Malta in the Mediterranean; Bulgaria and Romania are currently expected to join in 2007. Turkey has candidate country status but has yet to open negotiations for membership in the EU. The European Commission has issued a positive opinion on Croatia's application for membership that will be considered by the European Council in mid-June 2004.

The list of Sites of Community Importance that will together form the Natura 2000 network should host a sufficiently large sample of each habitat type and species to ensure that, through the implementation of the appropriate conservation measures, they will be maintained in a favourable conservation status at the EU and relevant biogeographic level.

### **Protection and Management of Natura 2000 Sites**

According to the Common Position Papers, by date of accession the new member states must apply Article 6 of the Habitats Directive to proposed Natura 2000 sites. The new members must take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of the habitats and species for which the areas have been selected.

While there are provisions for providing Community support, including co-financing, the main responsibility for implementation of the Natura 2000 network clearly lies with the Member States themselves. Measures required to be taken in Natura 2000 areas range from adopting management plans for each site to avoid deterioration of habitats as well as disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated. In addition, all plans and projects likely to affect a Natura 2000 site should be subjected to an assessment of the implications for the conservation objectives of the site.

However, the designation of a Natura 2000 site should not lead to a total ban on development, provided that this is ecologically sustainable and that it does not adversely affect the integrity of the site in question, or the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species present. Indeed, investment in socio-economic development is urgently needed in many of the larger Natura 2000 sites, in particular in some of the more marginal regions of the EU, where rural abandonment and unemployment present a genuine social problem. Natura 2000 is an opportunity to promote new models of development, which build on natural values rather than degrading them, and which enable the local population to benefit from their natural capital.

## **Natura 2000**

### **and the new EU Member States**

The extension of Natura 2000 to 12 additional countries is a new challenge. These countries bring with them a prodigious store of natural wealth, including Europe's last great wilderness areas and rich cultural landscapes. Unfortunately, extension of the Common Market to the east and south brings with it a myriad of threats to these natural treasures, from increased infrastructure development to intensified agricultural practices. Already, many of these valuable areas are threatened if not already lost.

In order to join the European Union, new EU Member States have had to transpose the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives into their national legislation and prepare for the establishment of Natura 2000 on their territory by the date of accession. This includes submitting by May 1, 2004 their lists of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) to the European Commission. The lists of pSCI will then be evaluated through a moderation process for each biogeographic region or through a bilateral process for certain countries.

To avoid irreversible losses, it is imperative that the Natura 2000 network is implemented in the new Member States effectively and without any delay, and that great care is taken in making development decisions that could well have costly and irreversible consequences for the EU's common natural heritage.

Implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directives should be seen as an opportunity to evaluate our store of natural values, re-consider development plans, and identify the best path for improving living standards while ensuring the long-term preservation of our natural resources.



## Natura 2000 status report and NGO list of sites

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the status of progress in identification and designation of the Natura 2000 network in the new Member States and to create a common yardstick, applied across the countries, to help gauge the relative quality of official preparations for site designation as well as to identify some of the remaining gaps in coverage. It is a joint effort of eight nongovernmental organisations including:

- Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology, Slovakia
- Estonian Fund for Nature
- Federation of Ecological and Environmental Organisations in Cyprus
- Lithuanian Fund for Nature
- Nature Trust Malta
- Slovenian Society for Bird Research and Nature Protection (DPPVN)
- Veronica, Czech Union for Nature Conservation
- WWF, including: WWF-Danube Carpathian Programme, WWF-Hungary, WWF-Latvia, WWF-Poland, WWF-Baltic Ecoregion Programme, WWF-European Endangered Seas Team and with support and assistance from WWF-Austria and WWF-Belgium.

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The present project builds on previous experience with the WWF Initiative for a European Shadow List of Natura 2000 Sites for the EU-15, which was published in June 2000. This earlier NGO contribution to the Natura 2000 site selection process in the EU-15 together with subsequent work has proven to be a valuable tool for promoting effective implementation of the Directives, helping to increase significantly the scope and quality of the sites proposed.

This project also follows on previous reports of the partners in the acceding countries, including a status report on preparations for Natura 2000 in the future EU Member States, *Progress on Preparation for*

*Natura 2000 in Future EU Member States*, published in January 2003<sup>2</sup>, as well as a report and conference proceedings focussed on financing for Natura 2000 in the enlarged European Union.<sup>3</sup>

### List of sites for selected habitats and species

NGO lists for selected habitats and species are presented for:

- Czech Republic
- Hungary
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Slovakia and
- Slovenia

It must be emphasised that the lists of sites proposed in the present report are limited to a selection of 24 habitats and 18 species and are by no means exhaustive. This exercise is not intended to replace or parallel ongoing efforts of the respective governments, which carry the full responsibility for implementing the Habitats and Birds Directives in their respective countries.

Sites have been identified according to the best available information, and based on their relative importance for the selected habitats and species from annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive (see table 1). This limited number of habitats and species have been selected according to a number of criteria, including: geographic and taxonomic distribution (including both species and habitats that are widely distributed and others that are endemic to specific countries); suitability to serve as “keystones” covering a number of habitats and species; data availability; possibility of being neglected in political decision making on proposed Natura 2000 sites; and organisational or conservation priorities of the respective partner organisations.



I. Introduction

The other habitats and species of European importance that are listed in Annexes I, II and IV of the Habitats Directives have not been included in the scope of this multi-country exercise. However, for some countries, including the Czech Republic, Estonia, Malta, Poland, Slovakia<sup>4</sup>, and Slovenia, a full list of sites based on all relevant species and habitats of European importance has been or is being developed by NGOs at the national level. Reference to these full lists is included in the individual country reports.

Bird species and the requirements of the Birds Directive are not included in this list, or only marginally, as they are already covered by the valuable work undertaken by member organisations of BirdLife International to identify Important Bird Areas.

- 2) Progress on Preparation for Natura 2000 in Future EU Member States: Synthesis and country reports for Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia (WWF-European Policy Office/Accession Initiative, January 2003). Available at: [www.panda.org/downloads/europe/n2000progressmailing20030122.pdf](http://www.panda.org/downloads/europe/n2000progressmailing20030122.pdf).
- 3) Financing Natura 2000 in an Enlarged Europe – report from Conference on Financing Natura 2000, Budapest, October 28, 2003 (WWF-European Policy Office/Accession Initiative, December 2003). Available on the Internet at: [www.panda.org/downloads/europe/n2000conferencereportfinal.doc](http://www.panda.org/downloads/europe/n2000conferencereportfinal.doc).  
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- 4) For Malta and Slovakia, the full list, covering all relevant habitats and species, is included in annex 3 in this report.

**Table 1:**  
**List of selected habitats and species evaluated across participating countries for this report.**

Habitats	code
Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time	1110
Coastal lagoons	1150
Reefs	1170
Vegetated sea cliffs on the Atlantic and Baltic coast	1230
Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)	2120
Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters	3130
Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds	3160
Alpine rivers and its vegetation	3220
European dry heath on lowlands and mountains	4030
Xeric sand calcarous grasslands *	6120
Semi-natural dry grassland and scrubland facies on calcarous substrates (...) *	6210
Sub-pannonic steppic grassland *	6240
Lowland hay meadows *	6510
Fennoscandinavian wooded meadows <sup>a</sup>	6530
Active raised bogs *	7110
Transition mires and quaking bogs	7140
Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) *	7220
Caves not open to the public	8310
Natural old broad-leaved deciduous forests with epiphytes	9020
Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines *	9180
Mixed ash-alder alluvial forests of temperate and Boreal Europe (..)	91E0
Riparian mixed forests of <i>Quercus robur</i> , <i>Ulmus laevis</i> (...)	91F0
Pannonian woods with <i>Quercus pubescens</i> *	91H0
Acidophilus <i>Picea</i> forests of the montane to alpine levels ( <i>Vaccinio-Picetea</i> )	9410
Species	
Fauna	
<i>Bombina bombina</i>	1188
<i>Cottus gobio</i>	1163
<i>Emys orbicularis</i>	1120
<i>Lampetra planeri</i>	1096
<i>Lutra lutra</i>	1355
<i>Lynx lynx</i>	1361
<i>Maculinea nausithous</i>	1061
<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	1029
<i>Osmoderma eremita</i> *	1084
<i>Pteromys volans</i> <sup>a</sup>	1910
<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	1303
<i>Salmo salar</i>	1106
<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>	1335
<i>Ursus arctos</i> *	1354
Flora	
<i>Cypripedium calceolus</i>	1902
<i>Liparis loeselii</i>	1903
<i>Pulsatilla patens</i>	1477
<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i>	1528

\* asterisk denotes priority habitat or species

a) occurs only in Estonia and Latvia and will be covered by a later report

# Natura 2000 in the Carpathians

The Carpathian Mountains contain many of the most spectacular natural treasures now being brought into the EU fold. The arc of low mountains stretching from the Czech Republic in the west to Romania in the southeast are Europe's last bastion for large carnivores, including lynx, wolf, and bear, and home to the continent's largest remaining areas of virgin forest.

Countries of the region have already committed to preserving these unique natural riches in the Carpathian Convention<sup>5</sup>, signed by national representatives during the 5th Ministerial Conference *Environment for Europe* in Kiev in May 2003. Effective implementation of the Natura 2000 network in the relevant EU Member States of the region will take an important step towards putting the Convention into practice.



The present list of sites, even for the limited number of species and habitats included here, is not intended to be definitive. It is rather expected to be the starting point for a dynamic process of consultation and improvement among the partner organisations, other NGOs and experts leading up through the biogeographic seminars. Thus, this report and accompanying data sets are expected to be periodically added to and improved. Toward this purpose, an interactive version is under development and will be made available either on Internet or CD-ROM. For further information, please see [www.panda.org/epo](http://www.panda.org/epo) (section on Natura 2000) or contact Andreas Beckmann, [andreas.beckmann@wwf.at](mailto:andreas.beckmann@wwf.at)

## Status reports

Brief reports on current status of preparations for Natura 2000 are included for all 10 new Member States that have joined the European Union on 1 May 2004. Somewhat more detailed reports are also included for Bulgaria and Romania, which are currently expected to join the EU in 2007. Information is based on the experience of staff of WWF and partner organisations that 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), but also touch on other important aspects including communications (education and awareness raising), planning for future funding of the network, and current threats to potential sites.

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 the 12 new and future Member States.

5) Carpathian Convention text at:

[www.unece.org/env/documents/2003/ece/cep/ece.cep.104.e.pdf](http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2003/ece/cep/ece.cep.104.e.pdf)

For further information on the Carpathians, see: [www.carpathians.org](http://www.carpathians.org)



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## II. Synthesis of national reports

### Status of official preparations in new Member States

Most of the new Member States are expected to submit their list of proposed Sites of Community Importance within several weeks of their date of accession on May 1, 2004. At time of writing (mid-May), official lists of sites had been received by the European Commission for: Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia; while those for Malta and Slovenia were reportedly on their way.

The greatest delays are expected with lists from Cyprus, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. The present status of the Cypriot list is presently unclear; at time of writing this report, there were no reports that the list would be sent any time soon. Czech authorities have been among the most thorough in their identification of sites, and a proposed list of sites does exist. But problems in gaining passage of the Act on Nature Conservation have led to delays in consultation of the list with relevant stakeholders. As a result, according to latest information, the Czech list of pSCI could be submitted to the European Commission by the end of the summer.

The case of Hungary is more disconcerting. The necessary amendments of the Act on Nature Conservation has still not been passed by Parliament. Optimistic estimates see passage of the law occurring in early June; if everything goes smoothly with subsequent consultation and processing, the list could theoretically be sent to the European Commission by the end of June. A more sceptical, and perhaps more realistic, appraisal puts the estimated time of arrival at some time in early autumn or even later.

WWF and its partners call on the European Commission to develop a clear calendar to ensure that the biogeographic seminars relevant for the new Member

States do take place in the course of 2005 and 2006, and that the necessary steps to finalise the national proposed lists are not further delayed. In addition, national authorities and the European Commission must ensure that no funds are allocated to infrastructure and other projects which endanger potential Natura 2000 sites. This may require delaying allocation of EU funds where the lists of pSCI are not yet complete.

### Comments on national lists

Some of the lists proposed are quite substantial, reflecting the rich store of natural wealth in the region as well as relatively good site identification. Slovakia has proposed to designate 28.9% of the country's territory as Natura 2000, of which 11.72% is according to the Habitats Directive (pSCI) and remainder as bird areas designated according to the Birds Directive (SPA). Though impressive, the complete NGO list of sites included in this report suggests that the proposed pSCI will be insufficient to protect Slovakia's exceptional biodiversity, and that additional sites will need to be added.

Scientific preparation for Natura 2000 in the newest Member States has been relatively good – indeed, even brilliant if compared with the generally lacklustre progress that has marked implementation of Natura 2000 in the older EU Member States. Experience from the EU Member States has shown that timely preparations, though difficult in the short-term, cause less problems in the longer-term.

In most countries, the agency or organisations charged with the compilation of the scientific list of pSCI have produced fairly comprehensive and complete lists of sites. Many of the countries, e.g. the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, have been able to build on a relatively good existing base of scientific data and expertise, and made concerted efforts to fill in gaps – in the case of the Czech Republic, over 700 experts were involved in data collection for the pSCI at one point.

There have been much greater problems when it has come to finalisation of the pSCI. Moving from the scientific work of site selection to gaining support and approval for these sites from political decision makers and local stakeholders has been difficult.

In most countries, the initial lists of proposed sites have been subjected to extensive 'pruning' by various ministries, departments, and stakeholders. For example:

- In Cyprus, the initial list of sites, identified through a LIFE project according to the scientific criteria of the Habitats and Birds Directives, covered 26% of the island's territory, but was cut down to 14% by various ministries; it is now being further whittled by a stakeholder body.
- In Poland, the list published in May 2003, which covered some 18% of the country's territory, has been halved to approximately 9%, in part, apparently, because the Water Authorities fear loss of control over rivers when they are designated as a Natura 2000 sites. It is worth remarking that the Polish Government has omitted from its proposal two of the four pSCI that will be seriously affected by the Białystok route favoured by the Polish Government for the Via Baltica motorway (see annex 1, sites n° PL 024, PL 137, PL 143, PL 130).
- In Estonia, following a storm of criticism from land owners, the Ministry of Environment decided not to designate any sites on those private lands where owners objected to this designation.

Such problems echo those already faced – and in many cases still being faced – in the older EU countries. Throughout the European Union, implementation of the Natura 2000 network has required people to re-examine plans and options, face restrictions but also new opportunities. The example of the Lech in Austria (see boxed text page 12) shows that the process is not easy, but can lead to new opportunities. And there are already many examples throughout the new Member States and candidate countries that demonstrate a very practical vision for local social and economic development that is based on and indeed profits from maintaining natural and cultural heritage (see boxed texts, pages 12, 14).

The newest Member States do have one great advantage over their older neighbours in the Union: they can learn from previous experience and mistakes. Unfortunately, though much has been learned in terms of site identification, much less seems to have come through with regard to gaining political and stakeholder support. At least a part of the problems now being faced probably could have been avoided given better preparation and timely action in terms of both communications and financing for Natura 2000 (see separate items below).



## Stakeholder involvement

NGOs have been consulted on and in some cases even directly responsible for identification of the proposed Sites of Community Importance – as in the case of Slovakia, where the Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology and a consortium of other NGOs and institutes was responsible for preparing the scientific proposal of pSCI. Throughout the countries, national partners of BirdLife have played a key role in identifying bird areas (SPA).

There are considerable differences in the level of involvement of local stakeholders. Consultations with local stakeholders have been held for example in Lithuania and Slovakia, where there is a legal obligation to consult local stakeholders on site boundaries.

## Communications

### 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 members, including the newest Member States, have endorsed the so-called *El Teide declaration* of June 2002, Natura 2000: a Partnership for Nature, in which 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.

## Trans-European Networks for Transportation

In April 2004, the European Parliament approved revised guidelines for development of the Trans-European Networks for Transport (TEN-T), a network of pan-European transportation corridors to connect the enlarged EU from the Black Sea coast to the Cliffs of Moher. The guidelines include a list of 30 priority projects, including “removing bottlenecks on the Danube” as well as development of the Struma motorway, which is presently planned to pass through the Kresna Gorge in Bulgaria. How the projects are developed and evaluated will be of critical importance – official recommendations for the Danube have called for dredging to more than 2.7 meters, which could affect natural values along up to 1,000 km of the river, including large sections of the Danube in Hungary and the most valuable intact stretches along the lower Danube between Bulgaria and Romania. Under pressure from environmental groups, initial proposals put forward by the European Commission, which made little reference to the Habitats and Birds Directives, have been significantly improved, and provisions for environmental assessments strengthened.

These safety-catches should help. But the greater concern is that the rush to promote transportation links threatens to repeat the worst mistakes of existing EU member countries – building roads, rails, canals and airports for their own sake, without careful cost-benefit analysis that takes into account not only economic, but also social and environmental costs. The commitment made by EU statesmen at Gothenburg in 2001 to sustainable development, including breaking the link between (“de-coupling”) economic growth and further development of transportation infrastructure, is being put to a severe test.

## A new future for the Lech: Natura 2000 as opportunity

The Lech river in Tyrol in Austria is one of the last remaining free-flowing Alpine rivers. When Austria joined the EU in 1995, the river easily qualified for designation as a Natura 2000 site. Unfortunately, designation conflicted with another planned use of the river for hydro-power. WWF and other NGOs campaigned against the building of the planned dams and hydropower stations, taking the case all the way to the European Court of Justice – a case that they eventually won. Today, the Lech is protected as a Natura 2000 site. Local community leaders, many of which supported construction of the hydropower plant as a source of development for their communities, now support protection of the area's natural qualities, which have become a point of pride for area residents and an attraction for tourists and recreationists.<sup>6</sup>

## Biebrza Wetlands, Poland: Rural regeneration through conservation

Many locals opposed protection of the spectacular Biebrza wetlands in the early 1990s, seeing establishment of the national park as harming their opportunities to make a living in this poor area of north-eastern Poland. Local opinions have changed dramatically since then. The Park is increasingly seen as a chief asset for development. For the past decade, WWF has been working with local residents and park authorities to develop eco-tourism services, local crafts and products; to promote and market high-value products from nature-friendly farming; develop sustainable energy sources; and to revive local culture, traditions, and, ultimately, pride in this special region.



photo © W. Velkov

6) For other examples where Natura 2000 support local and regional development, see Promoting the Socio-economic Benefits of Natura 2000 (IEEP/WWF, 2002), available as pdf at: [www.panda.org/downloads/europe/natura2000socioeconomicbenefitscolour.pdf](http://www.panda.org/downloads/europe/natura2000socioeconomicbenefitscolour.pdf)

## II. Synthesis of national reports

Nevertheless, most accession countries have been relatively slow to inform key stakeholders and even responsible authorities, let alone the general public, about Natura 2000, its implications and also benefits. As a result, the ground often has been only poorly prepared when the time has come to gain political approval for proposed sites, or when rumours have spread concerning new demands from Brussels. Some rather ad hoc communications activities have been undertaken, ranging from publication of posters and brochures to development of websites. But what has been almost universally missing has been a more strategic approach – a comprehensive communications strategy backed by serious financial support. The promising start taken in this direction in early 2003 in the Czech Republic, where the Agency for Nature Conservation planned an 18 million CZK (€ 550,665) communications campaign, seems to have gotten derailed. A portion of the funding and activities have been taken over by the Protected Landscapes Area Administrations, with uncertain results. In Hungary, the government has provided € 20,000 in support for communications efforts by a coalition of NGOs. As mentioned in the section on stakeholder involvement further below, a number of countries have organised fairly extensive consultations with stakeholders at the local level.

### Threats to Natura 2000 sites and integration into sectoral policies

All countries report threats to potential Natura 2000 sites. The threats range from construction of motorways, such as the planned Via Baltica motorway through the Biebrza National Park in Poland, to the intensification of agricultural practices in Slovenia. In Estonia, there is discussion of two alternatives for connecting Saaremaa Island with the mainland. The choice is between building a bridge, which will seriously impact Natura 2000 sites, or digging a tunnel, which would probably be less environmentally damaging. In Slovakia, tourism is putting increasing pressure on the fragile ecosystems of the Tatra Mountains.

EU funds are likely to have a significant impact on Natura 2000 sites in the region – possibly positive, but quite probably negative, if applied inappropriately. Most of the infrastructure projects that are being developed now or in future, including construction of motorways, development of shipping on inland waterways, and flood defenses, will expect to receive significant support from EU Structural and Cohesion Funds as well as the European Investment Bank. It is essential that the European Commission ensures close co-ordination and supervision of EU funds and the application of EU environmental legislation.

The European Commission has clearly stated on numerous occasions that all EU funding 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 Natura 2000 sites. Future decision making on projects including development of the Via Baltica motorway in Poland, the Struma motorway in Bulgaria, and shipping on the Danube will provide litmus tests for these intentions in the newest Member States as well.

It will be important to see not only whether or not an environmental assessment has been undertaken, but what the quality of that assessment is, and whether it has indeed served as a firm basis for decision making. Particularly in this respect, the present situation with regard to the Via Baltica is, again, unsettling: while the Polish government has committed to undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the motorway, including an examination of all alternatives, it nevertheless appears to be moving forward with construction of the Białystok route. Whatever its quality, the Strategic Environmental Assessment will be little more than a fig leaf for what is for all intents and purposes a *fait accompli*.

In order to ensure that the significant investments now flowing into the new Member States indeed benefit these countries over the long term, it is essential that existing EU legislation on Strategic Environmental and Environmental Impact Assessments is fully and meticulously applied. Also of critical long-term importance is the full integration of environmental concerns into decision making in all sectors, especially with regard to agriculture, transportation, energy, regional development and spatial planning, as called for by EU statesmen at the Gothenburg Summit in June 2002.

## White Carpathians, Czech Republic: Cultivating local values

A rather unusual coalition of environmental groups, communities, local farmers and businesspeople have joined forces to promote development, and conservation, in the White Carpathians. The rolling, patchwork landscape stretched along the Czech-Slovak border consists of a rich mixture of forests, orchards, fields and brilliant flowering meadows, home to the rare orchids that are the region's hallmark. The area is also one of the poorest in the Czech Republic, with a high rate of unemployment. The partners have developed a myriad of small-scale initiatives, ranging from development of local products to landscape stewardship. A small juicing plant has been established in the village of Hostětín, and provides an economic incentive for local people to care for the rich genofund of apples and other fruit in the region. Environmental groups have teamed up with local farmers to return sheep and cattle to the area's meadows, helping to restore and maintain the rich meadow ecosystems. A range of public-private partnerships have also been established around the care of these areas. Taken together, these initiatives and many others are creating an alternative – and increasingly very practical – vision for sustainable development in the region.<sup>7</sup>



photo © M. Stránský

Unfortunately, relatively little progress has been made in integrating environmental concerns in general, and requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives in particular, into sectoral policies and programming by the EU newcomers. Some progress has been made with regard to agriculture and rural development, where preparation of the Rural Development Plans, and especially agri-environmental measures, has forced a certain measure of co-operation between authorities responsible for agriculture and environment. But no headway seems to have been made with regard to infrastructure and regional development. Current plans of the Polish government for developing the Via Baltica motorway through the Biebrza National Park, or of the Bulgarian authorities for pushing the Struma motorway through the spectacular Kresna Gorge, are symptomatic of a general approach that tends to disregard natural capital, and pay little more than lip service to EU environmental requirements. The situation is not helped by the fact that, even if the environmental authorities are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities, they tend to be on the bottom of the political totem pole.

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.

- 7) There are a large number of similar initiatives throughout these countries – for further examples, see among others Rural Livelihoods for Sustainability: Stories of Rural Regeneration from Central Europe (Environmental Partnership, 2004); Caring for the Land: A Decade of Promoting Landscape Stewardship in Central Europe (Environmental Partnership, 2000); or PAN Parks ([www.panparks.org/](http://www.panparks.org/)), which promotes development for local communities through improved conservation of protected areas.



## Financing

### Community co-financing

Article 8 of the Habitats Directive requires Member States to provide to the European Commission, in parallel with their lists of proposed sites for priority habitats and species, estimates relating to the Community co-financing for these sites. Financing for the management and protection of the Natura 2000 sites is a responsibility shared by national governments and the European Community.

In 2002, the European Commission established a working group (the so-called “Article 8 Working Group”) to explore solutions to the question of co-financing for the Natura 2000 network as a whole. Taking a conservative approach, the Working Group has estimated that for the EU-15, between € 3.4 and 5.7 billion (and possibly as much as € 8.8 billion) per year is needed between 2003 and 2013 for the implementation of Natura 2000<sup>8</sup>. In addition, the report outlined three options for financing Natura 2000:

1. the use of existing EU funding instruments (such as CAP or Regional funds);
2. the expansion of the EU LIFE Nature fund;
3. the establishment of a new independent, dedicated Natura 2000 fund.

Following the stakeholder consultation, the European Commission was expected to publish its recommendation on Community co-financing for Natura 2000 in a Communication to the European Parliament and the Council in Autumn 2003. At the time of writing this report in mid-May 2004 the Communication was still expected.

Recognising the importance of Natura 2000 to ensure the integration of environmental concerns in sectoral policies as well as the limited political support that a dedicated fund for Natura 2000 is likely to receive, WWF as well as other environmental organisations (cf joint BirdLife, EEB, WWF position paper on Financing Natura 2000) have supported a position that would allow for a combination of the three alternatives. This ‘combined approach’ should make use of the Structural Funds, the Common Agricultural Policy and the exist-

## Cultural landscapes: Hungarian puszta

Many of the sites listed in this report reflect the richness in biodiversity that is a ‘by product’ of traditional, extensive agricultural practices that are still widespread in the new Member States. A special example of this is the Hungarian Puszta, a semi-natural grassland ecosystem stretched between the Alpine and Carpathian mountain ranges that is the result of centuries of extensive grazing by Hungarian grey cattle and sheep.



8) Final report on financing Natura 2000, Working Group on Article 8 of the Habitats Directive (November 2002), [http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/final\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/final_report_en.pdf)

## Green corridors

Ensuring connections between individual sites will be essential for securing and maintaining favourable conservation status for many of the habitats and species protected under the Habitats Directive. For this reason, special attention has been paid in developing the NGO list of proposed sites to ensuring links between sites, either in the form of corridors or “stepping stones”, and especially in cross-border areas. Examples of this are the Tatra Mountains, comprising connecting sites in Poland and Slovakia; the Carpathians or Beskydy Mountains in the Polish, Slovak and Czech Republic border region; and the corridor function that Slovenia has for the Balkan and Alpine populations of brown bears (*Ursus arctos*). These mountain areas are still covered to a remarkable extent by near natural and even virgin forests. Also exceptional are the last remaining stretches of virgin lowland forest, the most well-known being the Bialowieza forest on the Polish-Belarusian border.



ing funding possibilities provided under the LIFE fund, and can be summarised as follows:

**Structural Funds.** The Structural Funds account for the second largest part of the EU budget. Until now, funding for regional development paid only little attention to the protection and maintenance of the environment and natural resources, despite the fact that they are of key importance for attaining harmonious, sustainable development in the EU. Regions that are rich in biodiversity, such as Natura 2000 sites, should be eligible for Structural Funds in order to promote development, which respects and preserves the regions' natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

This is especially true for the new EU Member States and candidate countries. A proportion of the Structural Funds should therefore be dedicated to nature conservation, including funding for establishing and maintaining infrastructure, facilitating training, education and public awareness activities, land purchase and other essential investment activities on Natura 2000 sites. This could be achieved by including a new environment objective dedicated to maintaining natural resources as a basis for sustainable development.

WWF and its partner organisations welcome both the proposal put forward in the Third Cohesion Report for a thematic priority focussed on environment and risk prevention as well as the specific reference to Natura 2000 that has been included in the proposal for the Financial Perspectives for 2007-13. Nevertheless, we believe that in order to effectively apply the integration principle – to ensure that environmental considerations are properly taken into account in all sectoral policy making – the EU's main financing instruments must be legally required to support correct management of the Natura 2000 network. The current approach of leaving this to the discretion of the Member States has not worked.

Moreover, we believe that funding for Natura 2000 should be ring-fenced, i.e. clearly earmarked for support of Natura 2000, and rules be set to ensure that the planned expenditure is effectively targeted to achieve objectives for the network. Earmarking part of these funds for Natura 2000 will ensure that they are indeed used for this purpose, and will also make it easier to follow the amount of funds spent on the network of Special Protection Areas.

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**Common Agricultural Policy.** There should also be an obligation that a proportion of the CAP budget be allocated to the management of Natura 2000 sites through the proposed Rural Development Fund. This would make use of higher rates of modulation, allow non-farmers to apply for rural development funds, and give greater incentives to Member States to use national options for farming that would enhance the environment.

**LIFE Nature.** The EU LIFE Nature fund has been instrumental in the management and restoration of habitats on Natura 2000 sites, as well as for the conservation of priority species of EU importance across the EU and in third countries. There are many activities related to the management of Natura 2000 sites that need a dedicated environment fund. Environmental NGOs therefore call for the maintenance of a substantially increased „LIFE fund“ to finance essential costs not covered by the above policies. This fund would make it possible to guide management of Natura 2000 while covering substantial gaps in financing.

### National co-financing

Experience in the existing EU Member States has shown how inadequate attention to the issue of financing can undermine the Natura 2000 process as a whole, causing unnecessary anxiety among various stakeholders. In some countries, competent authorities have been in a situation where they have been unable to provide answers to questions of land owners and land users that are concerned about the implications of site designation and the lack of financial schemes for sites management. In many cases, this has affected the consultation process as a whole and lead to opposition to Natura 2000 site designation.

Where it has not yet been done already, it is essential that the new Member States develop their plans for financing implementation of Natura 2000 as quickly as possible in order to be able to effectively use existing opportunities to cover some of the current costs related to Natura 2000 through existing EU funding programmes, and to influence the negotiations on the EU's next financial perspectives. National status reports show however that where financing plans exist, they are generally inadequate, with unrealistic estimations of costs.<sup>9</sup>

Worth special mention is the Czech Republic, which has been particularly thorough in its identification of Natura 2000 sites and, in contrast to a number of countries that have relied heavily on foreign support for the preparatory work, has funded most activities from its own state budget. A special team has now been established within the Ministry of Environment that is responsible for securing funding sources for Natura 2000 in the country.

Main sources of funding, both today and in the next financial perspective 2007–13, lie in agricultural support and Structural Funds as well as related programmes at national level. There is ample evidence, for example from the province of Lower Austria, that substantial – if not entirely adequate – funding can be mobilised even under current programmes for Natura 2000, given the right conditions as well as a fair amount of creativity and determination<sup>10</sup>. Unfortunately, those funds that do exist are not being fully used. Navigating through the thicket of measures and programmes is difficult enough, without facing established priorities and political interests. It will be essential in future not only that funding opportunities are increased and made easier to access, but that capacity is developed from national to local levels to actually grasp hold of these opportunities.

Generally, it seems that there is a great expectation that the bulk of support for Natura 2000 will come from EU funds. These are, however, unlikely to cover all needs, and in any case require co-financing from national sources. Recognising the burden that implementation of Natura 2000 can place on Member States, article 8 of the Habitats Directive provides for Community co-financing to shoulder some of this burden. But this does not detract from the fact that ultimate responsibility for implementing the Habitats and Birds Directives clearly lies first and foremost with the Member States.

9) See footnote 3), page 6.

10) See for example results of a seminar organised by WWF in co-operation with the Province of Lower Austria and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, Environment and Water Management: Implementation of Rural Development Plans in the CEE Accession Countries (November 24–25, 2003), available at: [www.panda.org/downloads/europe/rdpseminarreport.pdf](http://www.panda.org/downloads/europe/rdpseminarreport.pdf)



## Rivers: Blue life lines

The ‘green backbones’ of mountainous and forested areas are complemented by the blue life lines, the rivers that pass through the newest Member States. The Danube is the most important artery, passing through four and draining another three of the new Member States and candidate countries. The river, its tributary the Tisza and their floodplains feature prominently particularly in the Hungarian NGO list of sites. Also important are the Polish Vistula, Oder and Biebrza rivers; the Czech and Slovak Morava river; and the Slovenian Mura, Sava, Drava, Soca and Kolpa rivers. All of these rivers play vital roles as both corridors and core areas.

The Vistula, for example, often called the “Queen of Polish Rivers”, supports 75% of Polish breeding bird species and is one of the most important corridors for migrant birds in Europe. In contrast to most other rivers in Europe, which have been dammed and regulated over the past decades and centuries, relatively large sections of Central and Eastern European rivers still display natural processes, including meanders and formation of sand and gravel banks.



photo © WWF-Caroni/F. Hazelhoff

### Management

For the areas that already enjoy protection under national law, management plans usually already exist in one form or another. However, more often than not, these plans are not very detailed and miss any financial basis. For some other countries, existing management or spatial plans are not in line with securing favourable conservation status or the objective of a plan is not targeted to ensure protection of the species or habitats of concern.

However, a significant part of the Natura 2000 network will consist of previously unprotected areas. Management of these lands will need to be carried out by land owners or land users, be they farmers, foresters or hunters. Clarity must be provided by national authorities as to what is and is not permitted, and how to receive compensation for additional cost incurred. Positive in this respect is that Slovakia increased its budget for 2004 for compensation payments from approximately € 250,000 to € 2,500,000 – though still insufficient, a significant increase nonetheless.

Though sufficiently represented in the Natura 2000 network, many important habitat types, e.g. alkaline fens, wooded meadows, and semi-natural dry grasslands, suffer from abandonment or mismanagement. Delimitation of boundaries and formal nomination of sites is not an end of the process, but rather the beginning of the long-term duty of site protection and management in order to ensure the favourable conservation status as required by Article 1 of the Habitats Directive.

In addition, all plans and projects likely to affect a Natura 2000 site should be subject to an assessment of the implications to the conservation objective of the site (Articles 6.2–6.4).



## Conclusions

Compared to the significant delays in site designation suffered in the older EU countries, the process is relatively well on track in the 10 new Member States. A number of the lists of pSCI have already been received by the European Commission, and others are expected to be on their way. Only in the case of the Czech Republic, Hungary and possibly Cyprus are there expected to be significant delays.

In most cases, the scientific preparation, including identification of sites, has been relatively good. But greater political will and commitment will be needed for establishment of the network. Most if not all of the lists will require additions. In some cases, as with Poland or Cyprus, these additions will need to be substantial. Even the relatively solid Slovak list is missing a number of key natural values that will need to be added.

The challenge lies now in dealing with any insufficiencies – including not only those highlighted in this report – and moving quickly ahead to secure effective implementation of the Natura 2000 network. Securing adequate financing, particularly at a time when decisions are being made regarding future use of EU funds, will be critical to future implementation of the network. Here it is critical that funding opportunities are not only created at EU level, but also pulled through to practical implementation on the ground. Raising awareness and understanding of Natura 2000, its implications and benefits, will also be essential to developing understanding and support for the network among different stakeholders and the general public.

In light of national status reports and previous experience of Natura 2000 implementation process, WWF and its partners recommend that:

## Baltic Sea

The Baltic Sea's shallow areas, including coastal lagoons, shallow sandbanks, and both coastal and offshore reefs, serve importantly as spawning and nursery areas for fish as well as important feeding and wintering areas for large numbers of sea birds. The Baltic Sea is also home to harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) and large numbers of grey seals (*Halichoerus grypus*), ringed seals (*Phoca hispida*) and harbour seals (*Phoca vitulina*). Fish populations, including cod (*Gadus morhua*), represent an important value for fisheries.

The shallow and largely enclosed Baltic Sea is by its very nature vulnerable, and the low diversity makes the food chains very sensitive to disturbance. The sea sustains a heavy load of pollutants from bordering countries and is subject to a high degree of human activity, including fishing, shipping, coastal exploitation and development of offshore wind power, etc. To prevent further habitat degradation, many habitats and species require urgent protection. Unfortunately, knowledge of the distribution of many marine species and habitats is still limited, making it difficult to select Sites of Community Importance and to define their borders. However, it is clear that as marine species and pollutants move over long distances, marine Sites of Community Importance generally need to be quite large.



## Site identification and designation

- National authorities must not limit site identification to already protected areas and must take into full account all areas that fulfil the scientific criteria of the Habitats Directive, with specific consideration to corridors, buffer zones and stepping stones. It is essential that the areas designated form an ecologically coherent network, rather than a patchwork of already protected areas that have been designated according to various types of criteria.
- Countries must establish a process for reviewing and completing their lists of proposed sites at national level with the involvement of NGOs and on the basis of the scientific criteria set up in the Directive, without waiting for the European mitigation process.
- Where insufficiencies have been identified in the lists, further inventories and research must be undertaken at national level in order to propose additional sites, and without further delay. These tasks should be prioritised for the allocation of EU funding under the LIFE programme for 2005–06.
- The European Commission should develop a clear calendar to ensure that the biogeographic seminars relevant for the new Member States do take place in the course of 2005 and 2006, and that the necessary steps to finalise the national proposed lists are not further delayed. WWF and its partners call on the European Commission to develop a clear calendar to ensure that the biogeographic seminars relevant for the new Member States do take place in the course of 2005 and 2006, and that the necessary steps to finalise the national proposed lists are not further delayed. In addition, national authorities and the European Commission must ensure that no funds are allocated to infrastructure and other projects which endanger potential Natura 2000 sites. This may require delaying allocation of EU funds where the lists of pSCI are not yet complete.
- It is essential that coastal states – Poland, the Baltic countries, Cyprus and Malta – take part in the work of the Marine Natura 2000 expert group to also facilitate their full implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in the marine environment.
- 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 biogeographic scales, such as the Carpathian mountains, which include the territory of several different countries.

## Implementation

- 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.
- Where not done already, countries should submit to the European Commission their estimated costs and needs for EU co-financing without further delay in order to ensure that these needs will be taken into consideration in the forthcoming decision on EU financial perspective and co-financing scenarios for Natura 2000.
- Financing for Natura 2000 must be made a clear priority both by the EU institutions and the new Member States and candidate countries. Provisions for adequate levels of co-financing for Natura 2000 from Community sources must be included in the next financial perspective (2007–13). Support should be earmarked for Natura 2000 in the Structural Funds, the Common Agricultural Policy, as well as LIFE Nature or successor programme.
- National governments must provide for adequate support for the Natura 2000 network, recognising that this is not only required as co-financing for Community support, but also that responsibility for implementation of Natura 2000 lies first and foremost with the Member States themselves.
- In planning their support for the network, the new Member States should not overlook the substantial opportunities that already exist for drawing down Community co-financing for implementation of Natura 2000, including from agricultural and regional development funds.
- 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

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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 that it can yield. Awareness raising and education is especially urgent among relevant authorities at regional and local levels; as well as special interest groups such as farmers, land owners, business owners, hunters and fishermen.

### Summary of reports

#### for Bulgaria and Romania

Like the new Member States, Bulgaria and Romania must submit their lists of proposed Sites of Community Importance by their date of accession, which for both countries is currently expected to be in 2007. Those responsible at the Ministries of Environment, although well aware of the enormity of their task, generally lack the capacity and the financial as well as the human resources to meet the challenge of implementing Natura 2000 in their countries. Preparations for Natura 2000 that are being undertaken by or on behalf of the Bulgarian and Romanian governments are largely financed from foreign sources and with consultation and supervision from foreign experts, as has been the case in some other countries such as Lithuania. In Bulgaria, the Danish aid programme DANCEE has been supporting a two-year project focussed on data compilation and site identification as well as capacity building. A similar project, financed by the Dutch agency Senter International, has just concluded the conception phase in Romania. NGO involvement in both projects is relatively strong.

In both Bulgaria and Romania, relevant legislation has been transposed into national law, though imperfectly – in both cases, additional points or changes will still need to be incorporated into the national legislation. As in other countries, requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives are scarcely taken note of in sectoral planning, especially with regard to regional and infrastructure development.

A very positive development in both countries has been the increasing activity of nongovernmental organisations. In Bulgaria, NGOs including WWF, Green Balkans, Balkani Wildlife Society, and BirdLife Bulgaria have been closely involved in preparations, including site designation, capacity building, and legal analysis of relevant legislation. Work by Bulgarian NGOs has for example led to the adoption of 15 new habitats to the working lists for pSCI identification. A national meeting of stakeholders, organised by the NGOs and with involvement of the Ministry of Environment, is scheduled for June 29, 2004.

Activity among NGOs in Romania has gone from virtually nothing in September 2003 to a very substantial programme of activities today. The NGO Coalition on Natura 2000 in Romania, which was established in October 2003, includes 32 active members that are involved in information gathering and evaluation, capacity building, and awareness raising. Here too, a national stakeholder workshop was organised with involvement of the Romanian Ministry of Environment on May 22–23, 2004.

Threats to potential Natura 2000 sites in Bulgaria and Romania are numerous and similar to the threats faced in the newest Member States. Improved navigation of the Danube, one of the priority projects planned by the EU as part of its Trans European Network for Transportation (TEN-T), could have far-reaching impacts not only on the river's mid-section passing through Slovakia and Hungary, but also on the most valuable lower stretch between Bulgaria and Romania. Significant dredging and other modifications could have disastrous consequences for nature values within the Lower Danube Green Corridor, a series of protected areas and restoration projects that are being developed by Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine<sup>11</sup>.

Another priority project of the Trans-European Networks for Transportation is the Struma motorway<sup>12</sup>, which according to current plans of the Bulgarian government will pass through – and destroy – the outstanding natural values found in the Kresna Gorge. As in other cases, such as the Via Baltica in Poland, viable alternatives exist; the question is not so much whether or not to build the motorway, but rather where it should be built and under what conditions. Smaller-scale infrastructure projects, which could have equally far-reaching consequences if poorly implemented, include construction of smaller hydro-power plants on virtually every Bulgarian river.

There is generally a low level of awareness among relevant actors of what the consequences are of implementing Natura 2000, especially about the positive effects on rural development. Priority in the coming years should be given to capacity building in the relevant institutions, the organisation of broad consultations involving all relevant stakeholders and securing financing both from national as well as EU sources. At the same time, it is imperative that threats to potential Natura 2000 sites are dealt with at the earliest possible stage in order to ensure the long-term and sustainable use of these countries' prodigious natural capital.

11) See: [www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/where\\_we\\_work/europe/where/danube\\_carpathian/danube\\_river\\_basin/lower\\_danube\\_green\\_corridor.cfm](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/europe/where/danube_carpathian/danube_river_basin/lower_danube_green_corridor.cfm)

12) See: [www.kresna.org](http://www.kresna.org)



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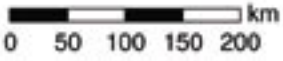
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### Legend

- Sites ..... ●
- Rivers and water bodies .....
- Country borders .....
- Land cover
  - Agricultural land .....
  - Forests .....
  - Urban areas .....
  - Water bodies .....
  - Wetlands .....
  - No data .....

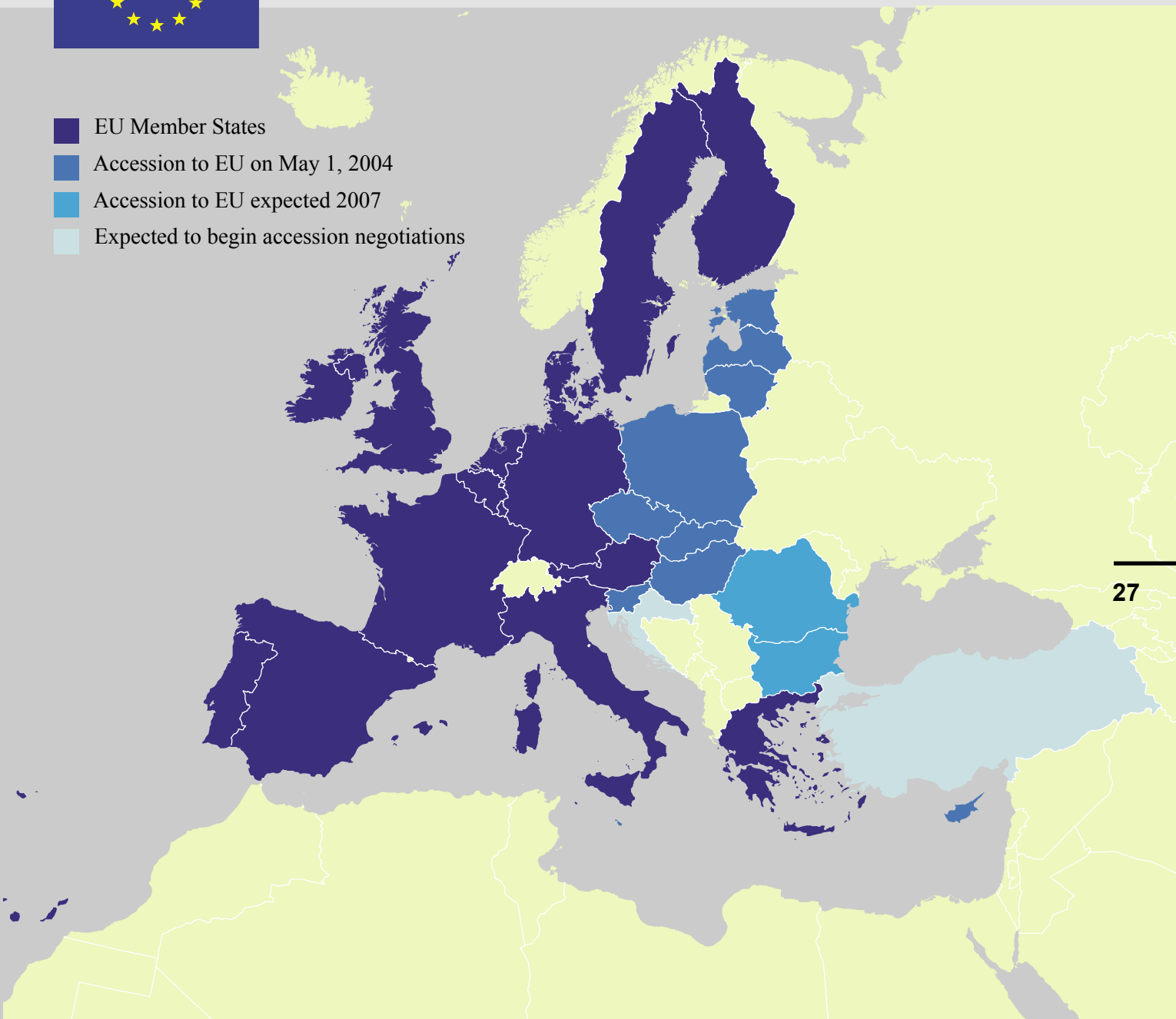


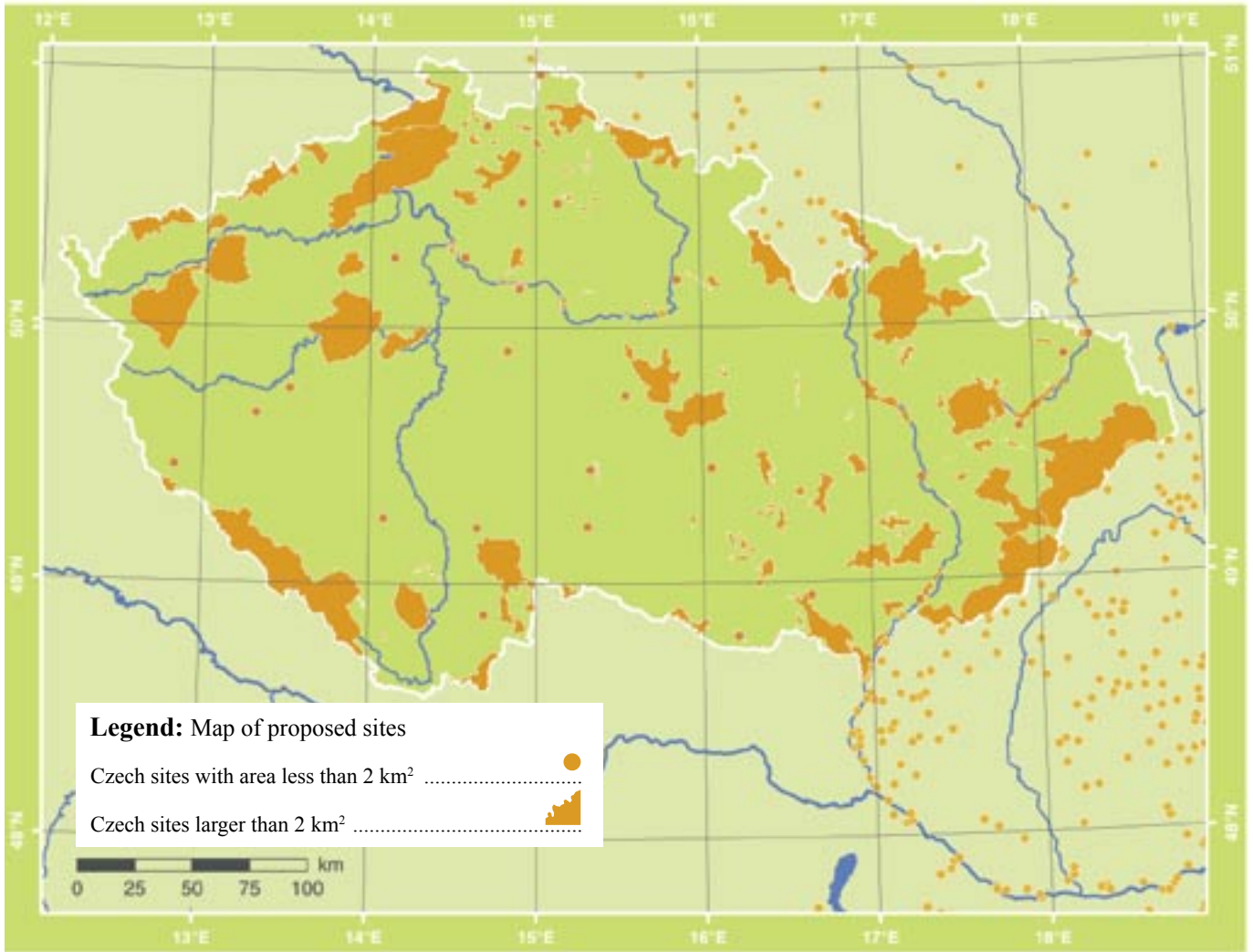


## IV. National reports and lists of sites

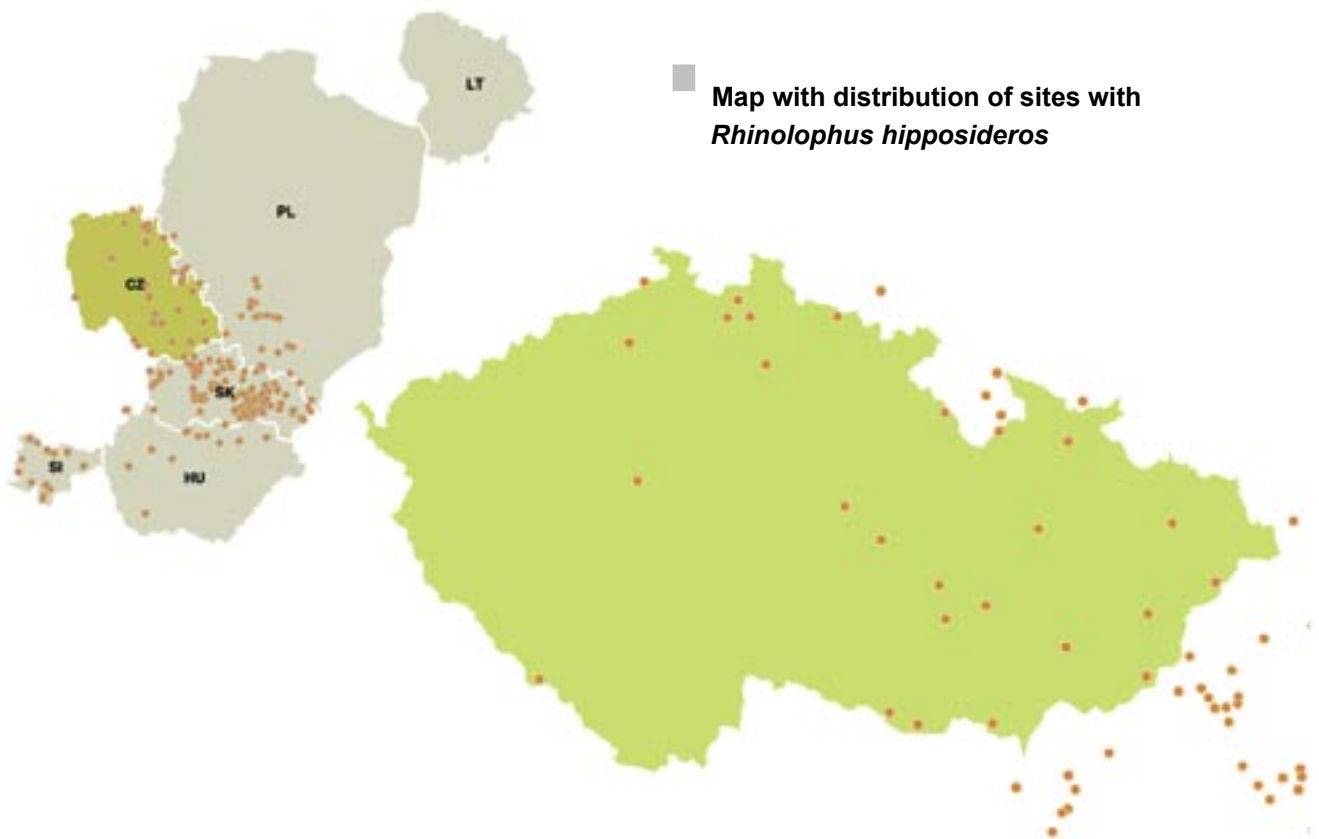


- EU Member States
- Accession to EU on May 1, 2004
- Accession to EU expected 2007
- Expected to begin accession negotiations





■ Map with distribution of sites with *Rhinolophus hipposideros*



## Czech Republic

Compiled by: *Dr. Mojmír Vlašín*,  
Veronica Ecological Institute,  
with support from 10 experts<sup>13</sup>

### Country statistics

**Area:** 78,866 km<sup>2</sup>  
(approximately the size of Austria)

**Terrain:** Bohemia in the west consists of rolling plains, hills, and plateaus surrounded by low mountains; Moravia in the east consists of very hilly country, bounded by the Carpathians in the east. The Vltava (Moldau) river flows south to north in the west, meeting the Labe (Elbe) river just north of Prague; the Morava (March) river flows through Moravia in the east.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Elbe River – 115 m, highest point – Sněžka in northern Bohemia – 1,602 m.

**Land use:** arable land – 41 %, permanent crops – 2 %, permanent pastures – 11 %, forests and woodland – 34 %, other – 12 % (1993 est.).

**Protected areas:** 4 National Parks (110,304 ha); 24 Protected Landscape Areas (1,041,565 ha) – together comprise 14.6 % of Czech territory; approximately 1,500 small sites protected as natural reserves or monuments.

**Population:** 10,264,212 (July 2001 est.).

**Capital:** Prague (1,181,000 inhabitants).

### Comments on sites proposed by NGOs for selected habitats and species

Many of the Natura 2000 sites proposed for the Czech Republic are located along the country's borders. This reflects not only the richness of biodiversity found in the low mountains that ring the country, but also the relative state of preservation and limited development of this area, much of which was recently protected within the folds of the Iron Curtain.

The largest area proposed by NGOs for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network consist of three connected sites stretched along the Czech-Slovak border up to Poland: the White Carpathians, Hostýnské a Vizovické Highlands and Beskydy Mountains. They are not only rich in habitats but are also home to large carnivores such as the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), lynx (*Lynx lynx*), wolf (*Canis lupus*) and also the otter (*Lutra lutra*). Together with the adjacent Slovak and Polish territories of the Carpathians (which are also proposed as Natura 2000 sites) they form an area that is of a vital interest for the survival of these species.

A similar situation exists on the German-Austrian border, along which there is a large area (mostly within the Šumava National Park) bordering Natura 2000 sites in the neighbouring countries. Also very valuable are sites that have been relatively preserved within former and present military training areas including Stínava, Doupovské hory, Libavá, Boletice, and Mladá.

A complete list of sites proposed by NGOs, covering all habitats and species on the annexes of the Habitats Directive, will be available from June 1, 2004 on the Internet at: [www.veronica.cz](http://www.veronica.cz), or from Dr. Mojmír Vlašín of ČSOP Veronica ([mojmir.vlasin@ecn.cz](mailto:mojmir.vlasin@ecn.cz))

13) Doc. Karel Hudec DrSc; RNDr. Josef Chytil; Doc. Věra Zelená; RNDr. Martin Culek; Doc. Milan Chytrý PhD.; Dr. Květa Morávková; Doc. Vlastik Kostkan PhD.; Dr. Jan Farkač; Petr Filippov; Mirek Mikát.

## Current status of official preparations

### Status of official list of sites

The Act on Nature Conservation needed for implementing Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic failed to pass Parliament by a single vote in the autumn 2003, but was finally adopted in April 2004. The law includes significant flaws that will need to be addressed, including unclear responsibility. Late passage of the Act on Nature Conservation has delayed finalisation of the list of pSCI for the Czech Republic. The preliminary list of pSCI is complete, but must still be consulted with relevant stakeholders before being submitted to the European Commission, which is not expected to occur until the end of summer 2004.

The Czech Ministry of Environment, which is responsible for Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic, charged the Czech Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection with collecting data and preparing the official list of sites. The Protected Landscape Areas Administration and National Park Administration are also involved.

### Financing

A total of approximately 200 million CZK or € 6 million to be used over a five-year period (1999-2004) was available and used for Natura 2000 mapping and creation of the first proposal, carried out by the Agency. Of the 200 million CZK, 5 million CZK or € 150,000 went to species mapping, the rest was used for habitat mapping and technical work. This amounts to an estimated 75% of the costs of implementing Natura 2000 all coming from a separate budget for Natura 2000 at the Ministry of Environment. In addition to this, an unknown portion of the budget of the Agency for Nature Conservation is also reserved for Natura 2000. Certainly compared to the funds reserved for technical environmental measures, such as water treatment and clean air (20.1 billion CZK or € 638 million in 2001, 80.1% of which was used for air pollution and cleaning of water), the budget is very small.

### Communications and awareness raising

A governmental communications strategy that was prepared by the Agency for Nature Conservation and submitted to the Ministry of Environment in February 2003 called for 18 million CZK (€ 540,000) in funding for activities including a national awareness raising campaign. Administration of the funds was unexpectedly taken over by the Protected Landscapes Areas Administration, with uncertain results and impact. A portion of the support went toward a series of activities organised by the Czech Union for Nature Conservation and other NGOs and targeted both at the general public and certain stakeholder groups. Examples of these activities are excursions to potential Natura 2000 areas and the planned distribution of information brochures. Activities are running from November 2003 through July 2004. A number of articles in newspapers and specialist magazines have appeared and seminars organised for scientific experts and government officials. Two documentaries on Natura 2000 have been produced; the first is being broadcast on Czech Television (Channel 2) at the end of May.

### Stakeholder involvement

To date, consultation with stakeholders has only been organised for SPA, in the form of hearings financed by the Government and organised by NGOs (Czech Ornithological Society, Czech Union for Nature Conservation – Veronica, etc).

Co-operation between the Ministry of Environment and NGOs on preparation for Natura 2000 has been fair. From the beginning, NGOs including the Botanical Society, the Czech Society for Ornithology (Czech BirdLife partner), Czech Union for Nature Conservation and Arnika, have been involved in site identification for Natura 2000. The Czech Society for Ornithology has prepared, on behalf of the Ministry of Environment, a comprehensive and elaborate proposal of Special Protection Areas (SPA). Starting in 2001, NGOs have been working with the Ministry of Environment and Nature Conservation Agency in organisation of various workshops and seminars related to Natura 2000. An NGO coalition for Natura 2000 (Koalice Natura) was established in early 2003.<sup>2</sup>



### Site management

For two pilot areas management plans were written during a project funded through the Dutch MATRA programme that ran from 2001–2003. It was carried out by a consortium of Arnika and a number of foreign consultancies such as DHV from the Netherlands. In January 2004, the Ministry of Environment together with the Ministry of Finance and with financial support from the European Commission – DG Environment put out a tender for a capacity building project focusing on the implementation of Natura 2000 in 15 sites, including the development of management plans. The tender has been won by a consortium of Dutch, Danish and British companies together with the Czech NGO Arnika and Palacký University in Olomouc. The project will run from April 2004 until the end of September 2005. Apart from the activities undertaken in the framework of these two projects, no management plans have yet been written.

### Threats to sites

The following sites are currently under threat from large infrastructure projects:

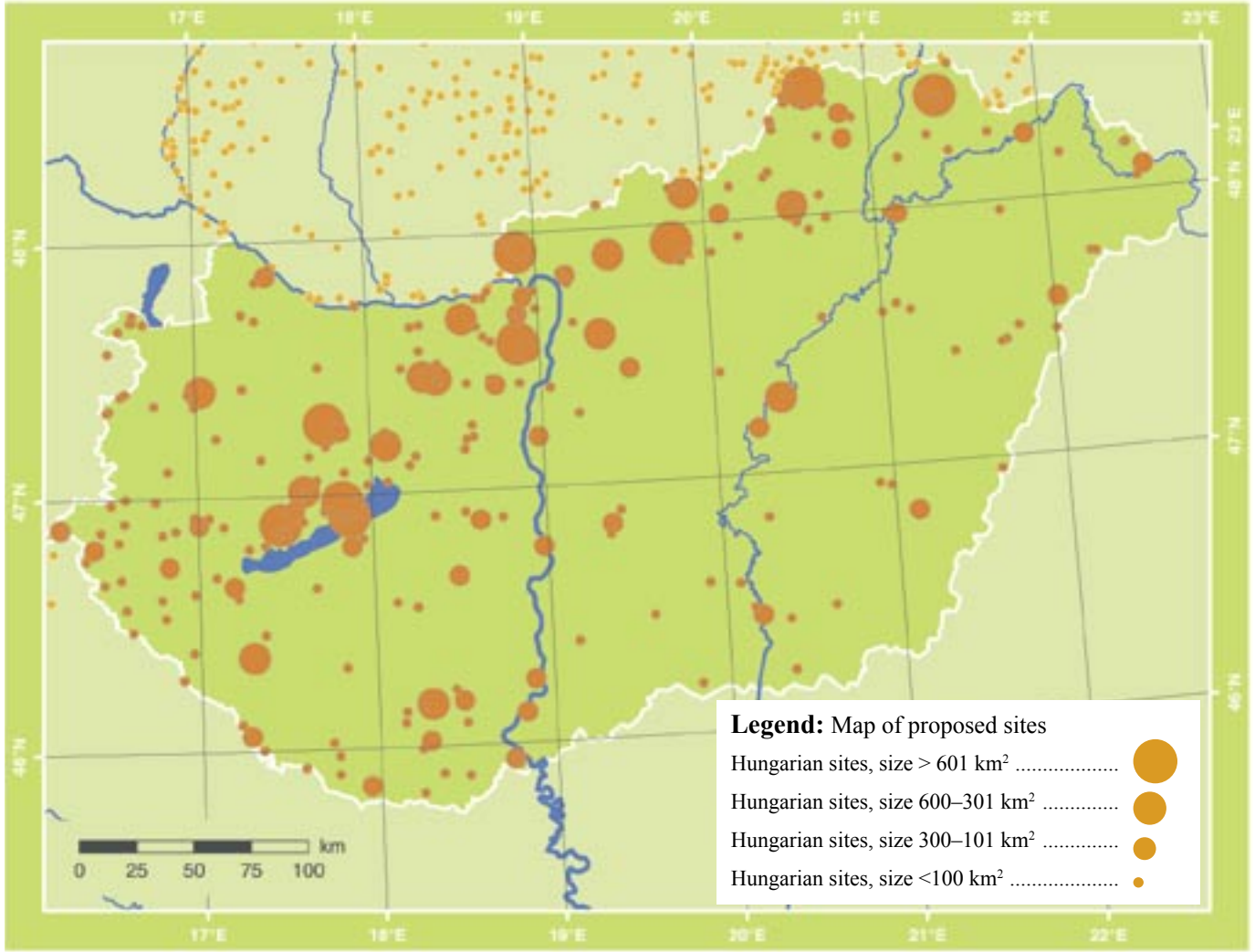
- pSCI České středohoří and Grünwald and SPA Východní Krušné hory, threatened by construction of the D8 highway from Praha to Dresden.
- pSCI Rozšířené Poodří as well as SPA Heřmanský stav-Odra-Poolží and Hraniční meandry Odry, threatened by the D47 highway from Lipník nad Bečvou to Katowice in Poland.
- SPA Pálava and pSCI Pálava a Podluží, threatened by the construction of the R52 motorway from Pohořelice to Mikulov.
- SPA Bzenecká Doubrava-Strážnické Pomoraví, threatened by the construction of the R55 motorway
- SPA Komárov threatened by the construction of the R35 motorway

- pSCI Labské pískovce, threatened by development of the Elbe waterway from Hřensko to Mělník.
- pSCI Pálava a Podluží, threatened by oil extraction near Břeclav as well as the SPA: Soutok-Tvrdonicko, Bzenecká Doubrava-Strážnické Pomoraví
- pSCI: Škařiny, Osypané břehy, Filena a Záhlinické rybníky, Zástudánčí, Slavíkovy ostrovy, Hrabanovská černava, Poodří, Heřmanský stav-Odra-Poolží, Litovelské Pomoraví a Labské Pískovce – all threatened by planned construction of the Danube-Oder-Elbe Canal.
- pSCI Jeseníky, threatened by the construction of the Nové Hermínovy dam.
- pSCI Šumava and SPA Boletice, threatened by the development of a ski resort.

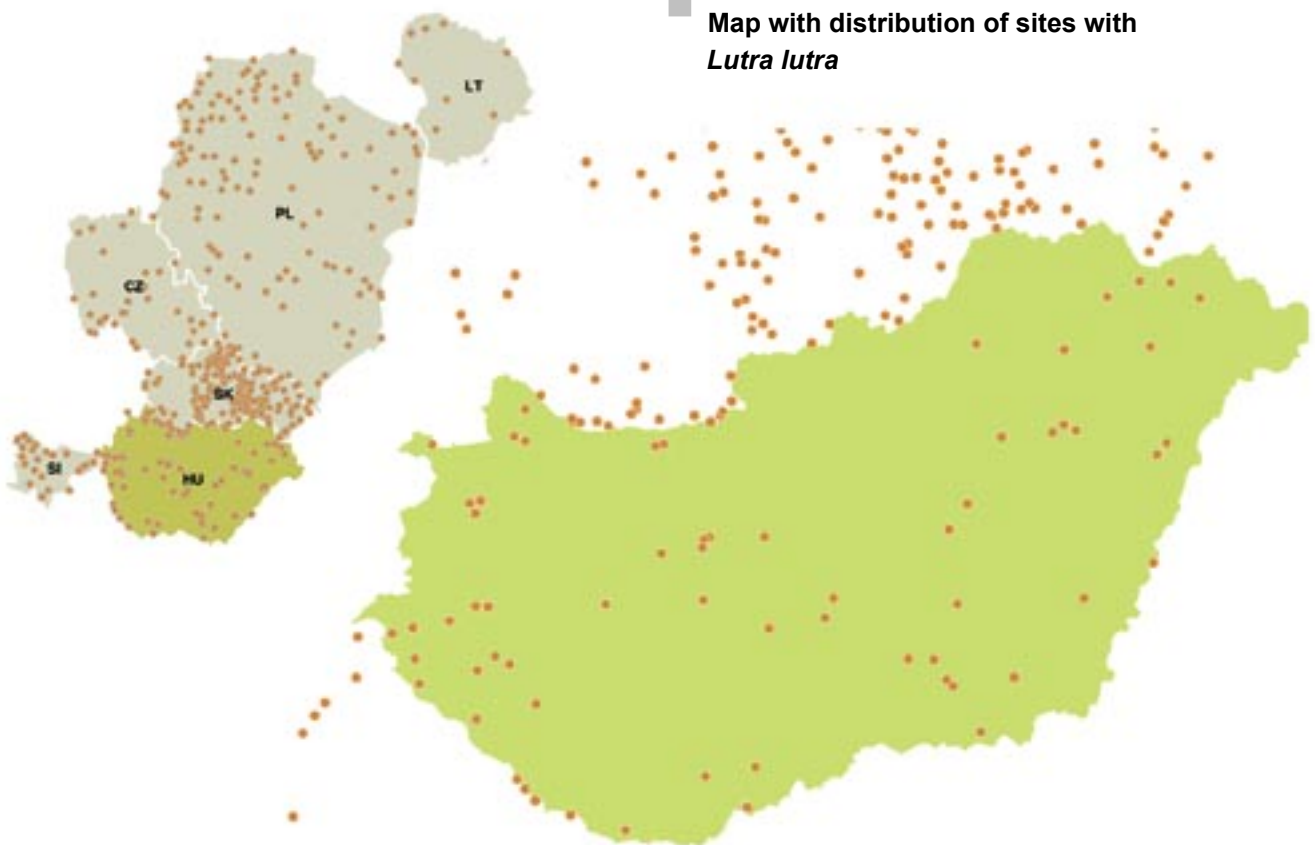
In many cases, including the R52 and D8 motorways as well as the Danube-Oder-Elbe canal, the projects in question will seek significant support from EU funds. It is imperative that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment be conducted for each project before any funding is provided, and that, if necessary, alternatives are followed, mitigation measures are undertaken, or projects even cancelled.

### Conclusions and priority actions

- Publish official list of pSCI and SPA.
- Broad discussion with stakeholders (including NGOs).
- Preparation of good management plans.
- Establishing Natura 2000 sites (with wardens, clear borders and favourable conditions)



Map with distribution of sites with *Lutra lutra*



## Hungary

Compiled by: *Brigitta Bozsó*, WWF-Hungary

### Country statistics

**Area:** 93,030 km<sup>2</sup> (somewhat larger than Austria)

**Terrain:** mostly flat, with hills and low mountains to the western part of the country and along its border. The feet of the Carpathians and the Alps stretch along the Slovak and Austrian border. Two main rivers run through the country: the Danube and the Tisza.

Lake Balaton, Central Europe's largest lake, lies in the west; Lake Fertő (Neusiedler See) is in the northwest, divided by the Austro-Hungarian border.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Tisza River 78 m, highest point – Kékes 1,014 m

**Land use:** 51% arable land, 3.6% permanent crops, 12.4% pastures, 19% forests and woodland 19%, other – 14% (1999)

**Protected areas:** 10 national parks (484,883 ha), 36 Protected Landscape Areas (309,817 ha), and 142 Protected Sites (25,927 ha), Nature Reserves and Natural Monuments (together with locally protected reserves ca. 10% of the country's territory).

**Population:** 10,197,119 (2001)

**Capital:** Budapest (1,775,203 inhabitants, 2001)

### Comments on sites proposed by NGOs for selected habitats and species

At the moment, approximately 10% of the country's territory is protected. Extension of this protected area network through implementation of the Natura 2000 network (resulting in roughly a doubling of area under protection) is a very important step and would be a great achievement.

Thanks to better environmental conditions and traditional farming practices, some species such as the otter (*Lutra lutra*) and suslik (*Spermophilus citellus*) that are rare in western countries are still quite common in Hungary.

Hungary's main rivers, including the Danube, Tisza, and Drava, are among the most important biodiversity corridors, providing living conditions for many freshwater species of European importance. Alluvial forests are potentially very valuable habitats, although they have been significantly degraded as the result of intensive forestry practices. Remaining core habitats are threatened in some cases with extinction.

Cross-border sites are very important, as are grassland habitats, especially in view of rural development activities. Border areas, such as the Northern Mountains are especially important for large carnivores. Most of these territories contain protected areas, including national parks, but the extension of the protected network is very important for species that need large areas and have complex habitat requirements.

Thanks to varying climatic and special soil conditions, the surroundings of Budapest, especially the Buda Hills, are among the most precious biodiversity areas. They are home to valuable habitats and species, including the endemic Dolomite flax (*Linum dolomiticum*) or the yellow lady's slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*). Unfortunately, these areas are under strong pressure from urban and infrastructure development and other human pressure. Extension of the Natura 2000 network should help mediate needs for development without threatening the future survival of this outstanding natural heritage.

## Current status of official preparations

### Status of official list of sites

The government's list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) is completed and available on the Ministry of Environment's website ([www.kvvm.hu/dokumentum.php?content\\_id=426](http://www.kvvm.hu/dokumentum.php?content_id=426)). In order to be officially adopted, however, the Law on Nature Conservation must first be amended. At the time of writing (mid-May), draft legislation had been submitted to the Parliament, which was expected to vote on the amendments by their last session in early June. The amended law will give the Government the power to adopt by governmental decree the list of pSCI and SPA. The proposed list of sites must then be made available for consultation by local stakeholders for a period of 15 days. Comments and objections will be collected and considered by the Ministry of Environment, though the authorities are not bound to respect these opinions. This all must take place before the final list of sites is agreed. Current planning sees these steps occurring in very short order, so that the final list of pSCI and SPA can be submitted to the European Commission by the end of June. It is quite possible, however, that this precise timeline will suffer delays, and the submission of the list of sites will slip into autumn.

### Financing

According to rough cost estimates for financing of Natura 2000 (based upon Article 8. Working Group report), the establishment and management of the network in Hungary would cost 2 billion HUF (ca. € 8 million) per year. According to the National Conservation Plan ca. € 7 million should be spent for Natura 2000 (monitoring and research, reporting, communications, management) in the first two years. However this amount is not secured and allocated in the state budget yet. All financing options that to date have been planned to contribute to Natura 2000, including the state budget, "Green source" Central Environmental Fund and national Agri-environmental Programme, are in flux following merging of the Central Environmental Fund with the Water Funds as well as general cuts in the state budget, which inevitably will affect support available for nature conservation.

### Communications and awareness raising

The Hungarian government does not have a comprehensive communications strategy for Natura 2000. A communications initiative on Natura 2000 is now being undertaken by the Hungarian Natura 2000 NGO working group with support of € 40.000 from the Hungarian Ministry of Environment as well as additional sources, including the EU PHARE programme. The initiative, which was launched on May 6, 2004 and will run for a couple months, will consist largely of training and awareness raising for key stakeholders, including local governments and farmers, as well as mobile exhibits on Natura 2000. The agreement signed by the NGOs with the Hungarian Ministry also mentions further cooperation on awareness raising for Natura 2000, support for which should come from the Central Environmental Fund.

### Stakeholder involvement

Members of the NGO working group on Natura 2000 (National Society of Conservationists, MME/BirdLife Hungary, CEEWEB and WWF-Hungary) were consulted by the national authorities at an early stage of preparation for Natura 2000. BirdLife Hungary has been closely involved in the creation of the official list of Special Protection Areas (SPA).

The governmental decree that will publicise the list of proposed Sites of Community Importance also states that the government must put a map with location of the site on display at the local government office together with the list of relevant species and habitats. Further distribution of information is carried out by the town clerk according to local procedures. Local residents have the opportunity to express their opinion, which should then be considered by the Conservation Authority, though they are not bound to follow these opinions.



### Site management

The draft Natura 2000 legislation does not contain any provisions regarding site management. According to current legislation, when a site is designated as a protected area, the authorities send the management plan to land owners informing them of the measures that must be taken and the possibilities to receive subsidies or compensation. It is likely that the same procedure will be followed with Natura 2000 sites, although the legislative and financial background for provisions (e.g. compensation) has not yet been established.

Apart from sites already protected like National Parks, no management plans have been written nor are they under development. The Conservation Authority will kick off planning work after the sites are designated.

### Threats to sites

Some sites that are proposed for the Natura 2000 network are already deteriorating. Their current status is not protected, and it is likely that the valuable species and habitats they contain are going to disappear before the sites are even officially designated, let alone protected. Examples of such areas include clear fellings in the Nagykovács forest. An especially controversial case is the planned – and already authorised – construction of a NATO radar on Zengő Hill.

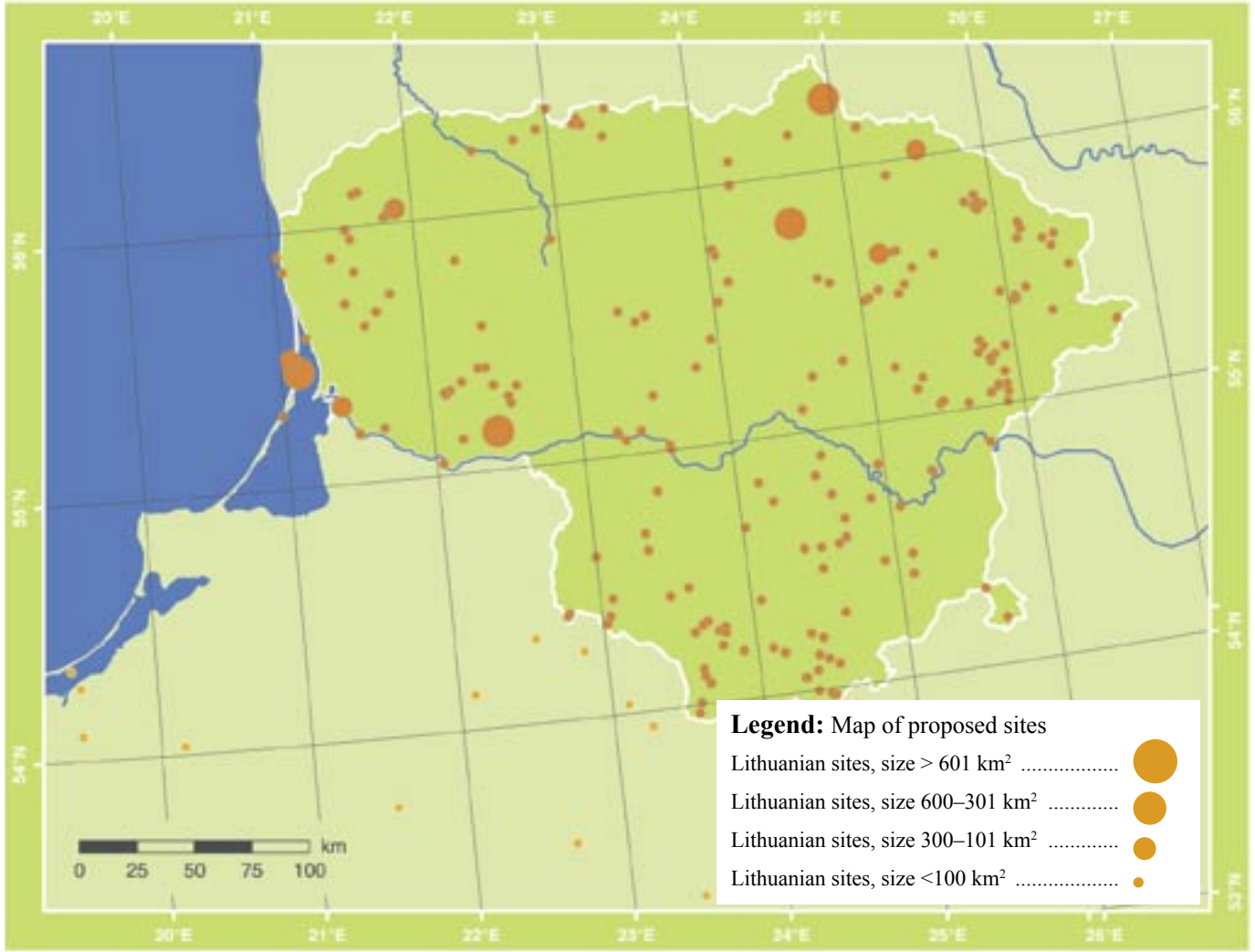
Another typical threat is the urban sprawl that is especially significant around Budapest. The Buda Hills are in fact one of the most important biodiversity hotspots of Hungary. It is likely that the short-term benefits of selling land for housing development will be claimed as “overriding public interest” in the future, undermining the long-term public benefits of favourable environmental conditions, rich in biodiversity. Many examples of this could be mentioned here, though one in particular is the old clay-mine in Százhalombatta that is surrounded by protected areas and a pSCI site.

Major transportation projects, such as development of shipping along the Danube waterway transport corridor, also pose a serious threat. The Danube project is one of 30 priority projects being promoted by the EU as part of the Trans-European Network for Transportation (TEN-T), and that are expected to enjoy priority for funding from the EU as well as European Investment Bank. It is imperative that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment is undertaken for these projects before any investment or work begins, in order to ensure that economic interests will not overrule environmental legislation.

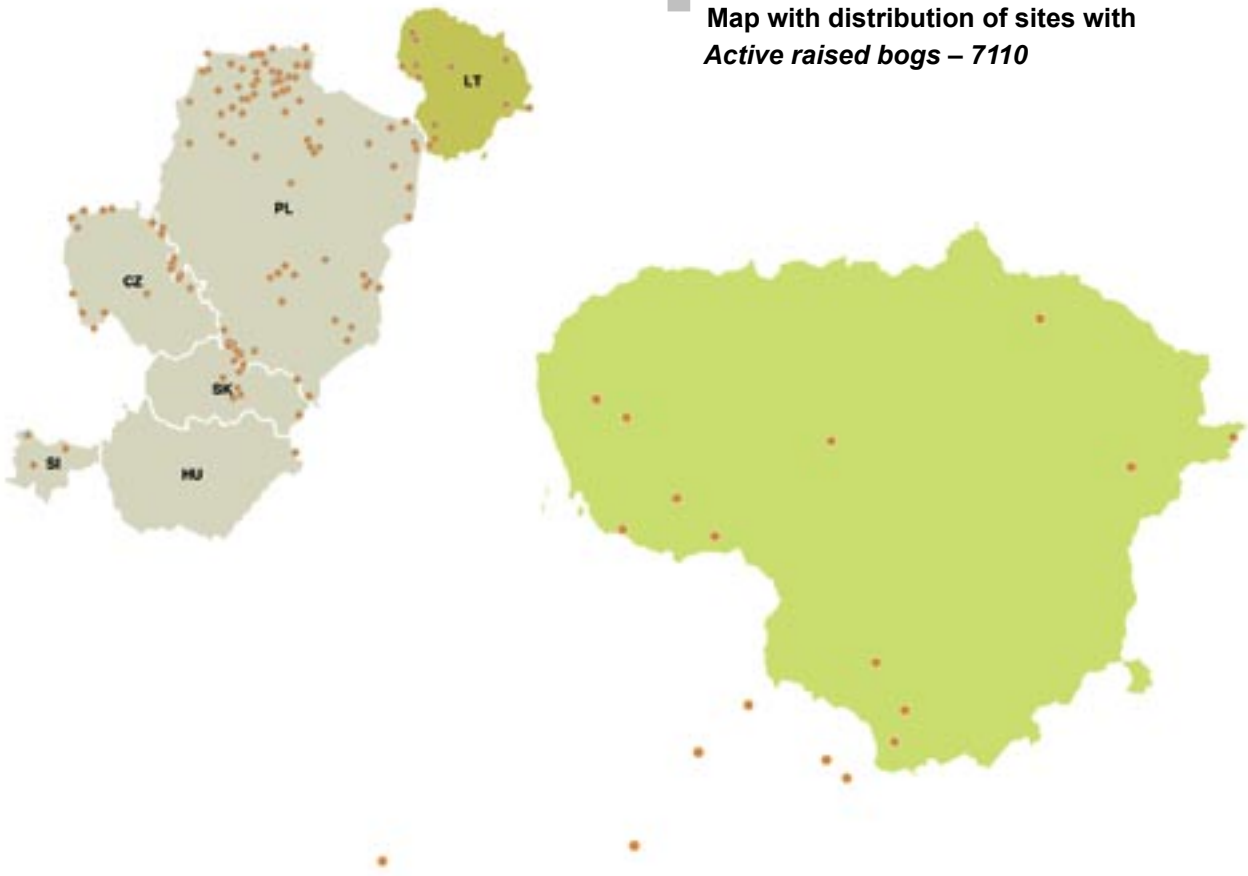
In Croatia, gravel mining in the Drava river and the planned construction of the Novo Virje hydropower dam will have a serious impact on the river and hydrological regime, not only in Croatia but also in Hungary as well – affecting valuable riparian areas including the Drava National Park. Gravel mining is also taking place on a smaller-scale on the Hungarian side of the Drava river. Despite close monitoring of authorities and NGOs, in many cases information on the destruction of sites comes too late, after damage has already been done.

## Conclusions and priority actions

- Publication and communication of list of proposed Sites of Community Importance.
- Capacity building (increase of staff and resources) for relevant National Park administrations.
- Ensure proper financing for establishment of Natura 2000 network (including compensation fund, Hungarian agri-environmental programme, Central Environmental Fund, co-financing for LIFE-Nature).
- Update and collection of new scientific data.
- Strict implementation of conservation legislation, including governmental decree on Natura 2000 expected in early May, Strategic Environmental Assessments, etc.



Map with distribution of sites with *Active raised bogs – 7110*



## Lithuania

Compiled by: *Pranas Mierauskas*,  
Lithuanian Fund for Nature

### Country statistics:

**Area:** 65,200 km<sup>2</sup> (roughly the size of Ireland).

**Terrain:** alternation of lowlands with highlands, many scattered small lakes, fertile soil, Baltic coast with sandy, stony bottoms and shallow areas.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Baltic Sea 0 m, highest point – Juozapines/Kalnas 293.6 m.

**Land use:** arable land – 39%, permanent crops – 9%, permanent pastures – 6%, forests and woodland – 31%, other – 15% (2001).

**Protected Areas:** 5 National Parks (152,294 ha), 4 State Nature Reserves (23,805 ha), 30 Regional Parks (409,911 ha), 54 Landscape Reserves (58,428 ha).

**Population:** 3,610,535 (July 2001 est.).

**Capital:** Vilnius (600,000 inhabitants).

### Comments on sites proposed by NGOs for selected habitats and species

The selected sites are important in terms of breeding and feeding grounds, as well as stepping stones for migratory species. The main principle for selection of sites was to suggest a relevant percentage of distribution of habitat types as well as population size of (especially priority) species, and to ensure favourable conservation status.

The proposed marine sites represent sea areas (coastal lagoons, sandbanks and reefs) that are important for marine biodiversity in Lithuania and the Baltic Sea e.g. important spawning and nursery areas for fish and feeding and wintering areas for sea birds. Knowledge of the distribution of many marine species and habitats in Lithuania is still insufficient, making it is difficult to select SCIs and to define the borders.

### Current status of official preparations

#### Status of official list of sites

The Ministry of Environment adopted the first portion of 57 pSCI on March 2, 2004; additional sites were adopted by the ministry in April, bringing the total number of pSCI to 274. Lithuania's list of pSCI was received by the European Commission in early May.

### Financing

The Lithuanian Government and the Ministry of Environment have no special budget for implementing Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, which deals with site management. An estimated 5 million LTL (€ 1.4 million) is however needed to carry out the necessary management measures (habitats and species management). For information and recreation facilities, on the other hand there an annual budget was allocated, though the exact amount varied every year. For 2004–2005 there are plans to get support from EU structural funds: 2.3 million LTL (€ 0.66 million) for preparation or amendment of existing planning schemes (spatial plans), 1.7 million LTL (€ 0.46 million) for monitoring activities and necessary equipment, 10.5 million LTL (€ 3 million) for implementation activities (building or restoration of information centres, museums, exhibitions, nature trails, and some amount for nature management), 3 million LTL (€ 0.86 million) for removing of abandoned buildings in protected areas (e.g. collective farms, garages, former military camps and other buildings from the soviet times). Though the amount seems to be significant, the majority of resources would be allocated not for implementing article 6 of the Habitats directive, but for building and improvement of recreation and tourism information facilities with lower priority for nature conservation.

### Communications and awareness raising

A series of meetings have been held with local stakeholders to discuss sites designated for Natura 2000 (see below, stakeholder involvement) In the past 2–3 years numerous meetings and communication activities such as newspaper articles and TV programmes have been organised in Lithuania in the framework of a DANCEE project and carried out by a Danish consultancy. Unfortunately there are no plans for future stakeholders' involvement in the Natura 2000 implementation process.

### Stakeholder involvement

Lithuania has strict procedures for establishing protected areas and virtually always follows this procedure. According to Lithuanian law, land owners, municipal and governmental representatives should agree with the establishment of a protected area, including future Natura 2000 sites. Plans to establish protected areas must be announced in advance, and stakeholders invited to a public meeting at which they can express their opinion on site designation, site boundaries, management regimes and conservation status. The government is then obliged to take into account these local opinions, but is not obliged to decide in their favour. Since it is required by law, in all cases meetings have been held with local stakeholders. In the case when land owners and other stakeholders do not agree on the designation of sites, the areas are not designated and the State Protected Areas Service removes this site from the Natura 2000 list.

### Management plans

To date, no management plans have been prepared for pSCI. There are prepared planning schemes (territorial or spatial plans), but they are not in line with the Habitats directive article 6 requirements. There is a PHARE project for the preparation of 60 (40 for pSCI and 20 for SPA) management plans. But it is no guarantee that plans will be developed as management plans. They could also develop as spatial planning schemes which do not necessarily contribute to implementation of Article 6 in the selected sites. The State Protected Areas Service is planning to develop new or to amend existing planning schemes for a certain amount of protected areas which are going to be designated as Natura 2000.



### ■ Threats to sites

Part of the forest in Europe's Centre landscape reserve has been proposed as a pSCI. Unfortunately, the State Protected Areas Service has made an agreement with the county authorities and a number of private businesses to turn the site into an entertainment area. The State Protected Areas Service has also agreed to decrease the total area of the landscape reserve in order to accommodate more commercial interests, e.g. golf fields.

The Padauguvos and Babtai-Varluva forests qualify as pSCI, but the land owners do not agree to designate these as protected areas.

The Baltoji Voke fish pond is a very important area for breeding and migratory birds. It qualifies as an SPA, and has been nominated as a pSCI for certain amphibian species. However, land owners have objected to establishment of the Natura 2000 site. In fact, a majority of the fish ponds in Lithuania could be established as SPA, but the situation is the same – in many cases land owners do not agree with site designation as an SPA. According to Lithuanian law, it is very difficult to designate a protected area against the objections of land owners.

Development of the Warsaw-Kaunas railway, a priority project for the EU's Trans-European Network for Transportation, could, depending on its routing, have a negative impact on potential Natura 2000 sites. A comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment report has not been developed and made public.

### ■ Conclusions and priority actions

- Effectively implement relevant nature conservation legislation.
- Change the institutional structure by establishing a nature conservation agency or department within the Environment Protection Agency;
- Change priorities at the Protected Areas Service from facilities/visitors management to nature management.
- Establish a monitoring system to estimate the effectiveness of nature management in protected areas.



## Malta

Compiled by: *Vincent Attard*, Nature Trust Malta

### Country statistics

**Total area:** 316 km<sup>2</sup>

**Terrain:** mostly low, rocky, flat to dissected plains; many coastal cliffs

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Mediterranean Sea 0 m; highest point – Ta‘Dmejrek 253 m (near Dingli)

**Land use:** arable land – 31.25%, permanent crops – 3.13%, other – 65.62% (1998 est.)

**Population:** 400,420 (July 2003 est.)

**Capital:** Valletta

### Comments on NGO List of sites

The Maltese islands feature some extraordinary natural areas of high ecological importance. Among examples are endemic fauna (lizards) and flora, important breeding grounds for birds on the western cliffs as well as typical Mediterranean habitats such as the Garrigue (a low-growing, secondary vegetation, whose dominant plants are aromatic herbs and prickly dwarf shrubs). Many of Malta's endemic species already enjoy legal protection.

Pressures on the land are high on the relatively small and densely populated islands that make up Malta. In February 2004, Nature Trust Malta submitted a list of sites for Natura 2000 to the Malta Environment and Planning Authority. While creating this list Nature Trust Malta was well aware of the existing pressures on the potential sites and therefore made sure that their proposal would ensure that a representative sample of the Maltese natural values would be preserved. This report includes the complete list of Natura 2000 sites that has been proposed by Nature Trust Malta. Their presentation is in a slightly different format from those given for other countries.

## Status of official preparations

### Status of government list of sites

Responsibility for preparing a list of pSCI and SPA for Malta lies with the Malta Environment and Planning Authority, which is under the charge of the Ministry of Rural Affairs and Environment. The list of pSCI has been completed, approved by the Ministry for Rural Affairs and Environment, and sent to the European Commission. The list is available on the website of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority ([www.mepa.org.mt](http://www.mepa.org.mt)).

Unfortunately, two of the most important sites have not been included in the government's proposed list of sites. They are:

1. The **Ta' Cenc cliff area**, which has long been an important bird area for various species such as the rare Spectacled Warbler (*Sylvia conspicillata*), the Corn Bunting (*Miliaria calandra*), the Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*) as well as holding one of the most impressive colonies of Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*) in the Maltese islands and a small colony of the otherwise elusive Storm Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*). The area includes a rich plant biodiversity in its garigue and rupestral habitats with several rare and/or endemic species such as: the National Plant Maltese Rock Centaury (*Palaeocyanus crassifolius*), *Ophrys lutea*, *Centaurea melitensis*, *Hyoseris frutescens*, *Darniella melitensis*. Needless to say, the area is also of great interest in terms of geology, natural history, and archeology, and has a high landscape value.
2. The **Qortin il\_Kbir, Tal-Magun and ta' Isopu** (and associated valleys) are all very ecologically rich garigue areas which should be afforded Level 1 protection status as they hold some very rare plant species such as *Iris pseudopumila*, *Cistus monspeliensis*, *Crepis pusilla*, *Althaea hirsute*, *Ononis ornithopodioides*, *Serapias vomeracea*, *Plantago bellardi*, *Romulea melitensis* and *Echinaria capitata*.

### Stakeholder involvement

Initially, the Maltese authorities called on environmental organisations to propose sites for consideration as part of the future Natura 2000 network. BirdLife Malta submitted its list of Important Bird Areas (IBA's), while Nature Trust Malta submitted a list of suggested areas for designation under the Habitats Directive (pSCI). Apart from these initial consultations, there has not been any further involvement of environmental organisations in preparations for Natura 2000. Nature Trust Malta is also not aware of any consultations that have taken place with other stakeholders such as land owners or local authorities, despite provisions in the Environmental Protection Act that require nationwide public consultation.

### Financing

No budget has been allocated for implementation of Natura 2000 in Malta. While the Government has set up an Environmental Fund, no funds have as yet been designated and no funding allocated for Natura 2000 sites. Small Funding Grants from the Malta Environment and Planning Authority have been budgeted as part of the Planning gain. This means that in case a project developer damages a site, the bank guarantee of the developer can be used to finance repair activities. Only very limited support has been provided by the authorities for work undertaken by NGOs. Nature Trust Malta has been awarded a LIFE grant (total of € 320,000, of which € 210,000 comes from the European Commission), which will be used for the protection of Dwejra, a proposed Natura 2000 and possible UNESCO World heritage site.



### ■ **Communications and awareness raising**

To date, the Government has not undertaken any communications or awareness raising activities regarding Natura 2000. We are not presently aware of any plans to do so in future.

Nature Trust Malta has been doing considerable media work focussed on Natura 2000, including regular press releases on potential Natura 2000 sites and the threats they face. We have also been preparing and distributing publications documenting important sites. A mobile exhibition on nature protection organised by Nature Trust is also travelling from school to school. In addition, Nature Trust Malta organises regular guided walks in various localities to raise public awareness on the importance of the Natura 2000 sites and why locals should be proud and protect these areas in their localities. Nature Trust Malta also has a green line for people to report environmental damage happening in any area.

### ■ **Management plans**

Management Plans have been written or are being written for those sites where NGOs are involved in management, including Dwejra, Wied Ghollieqa Nature Reserve, Marsaxlokk Salt marsh and White Tower Bay sand dunes. For other sites, no management plans have yet been developed.

### ■ **Threats to sites**

Most of the proposed Natura 2000 sites are under threat from intense pressure on the limited areas available on the Maltese Islands. Strong pressure comes especially from agriculture and housing development. Other threats come from illegal activities such as bird trapping, off-road driving in four-wheel vehicles and illegal dumping of waste. A key problem is that law enforcement on the Islands is very weak. Another example is the continuous burning by vandals, probably for land speculation, of a valley in the west of Malta which is home to endemic fauna.

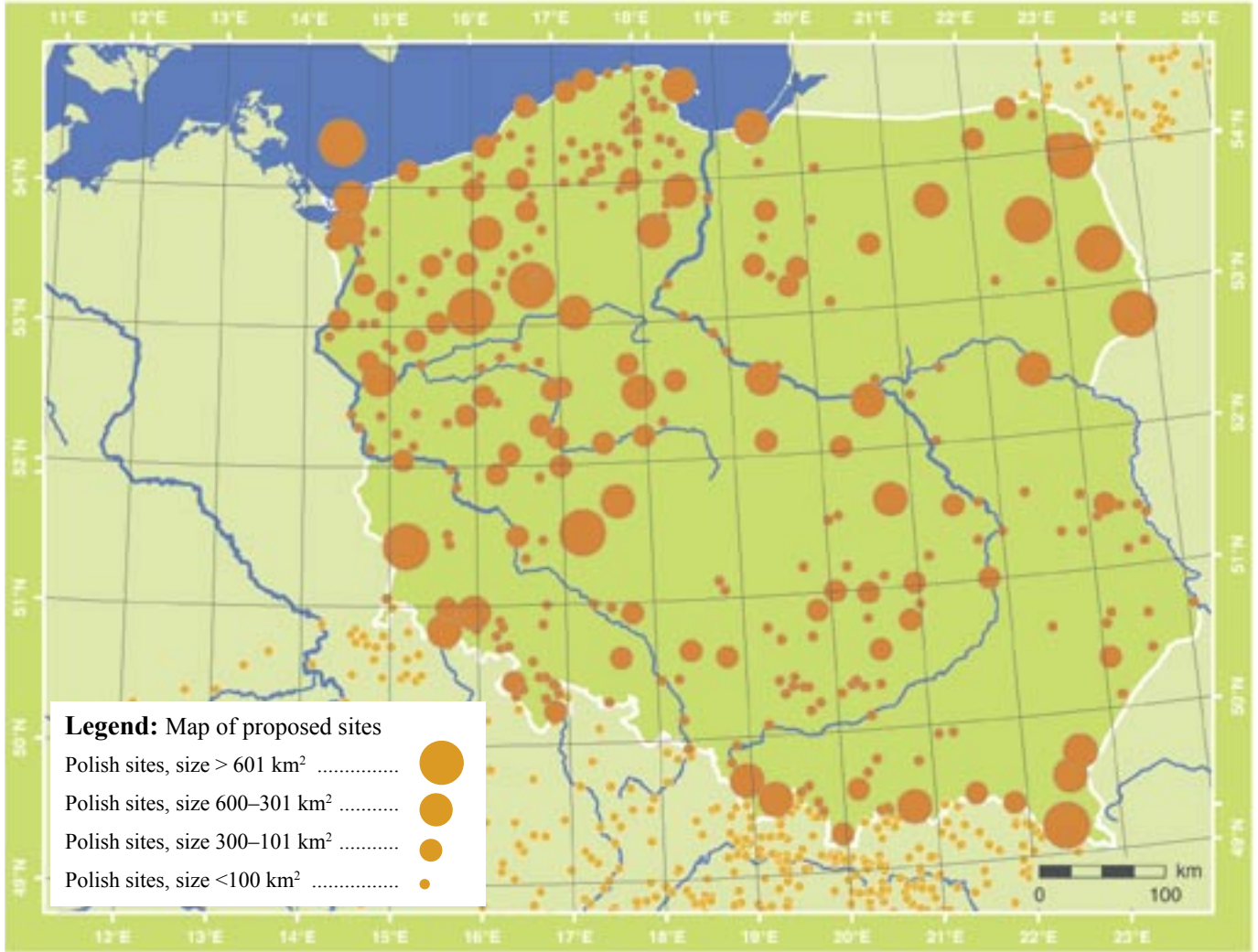
It is of crucial importance that the Environmental Police Unit and the Environment Inspectors get more staff (currently there are only 23 policemen who cover not only environmental crimes but also other crimes such as gambling and prostitution). In addition, more specialised Green Wardens are needed who can carry out surveillance of areas. This is something Nature Trust Malta has been lobbying for the last four years. Some of the sites, such as the Bahrija valley and the Ta Cenc Cliffs, are still deteriorating as a result of uncontrolled human activities and tourism development.

Bird trapping has negative impacts, not only for the birds concerned, but also for the Garigue habitat in which it takes place, mostly because of the use of herbicides to clear the vegetation in order to put up nets.

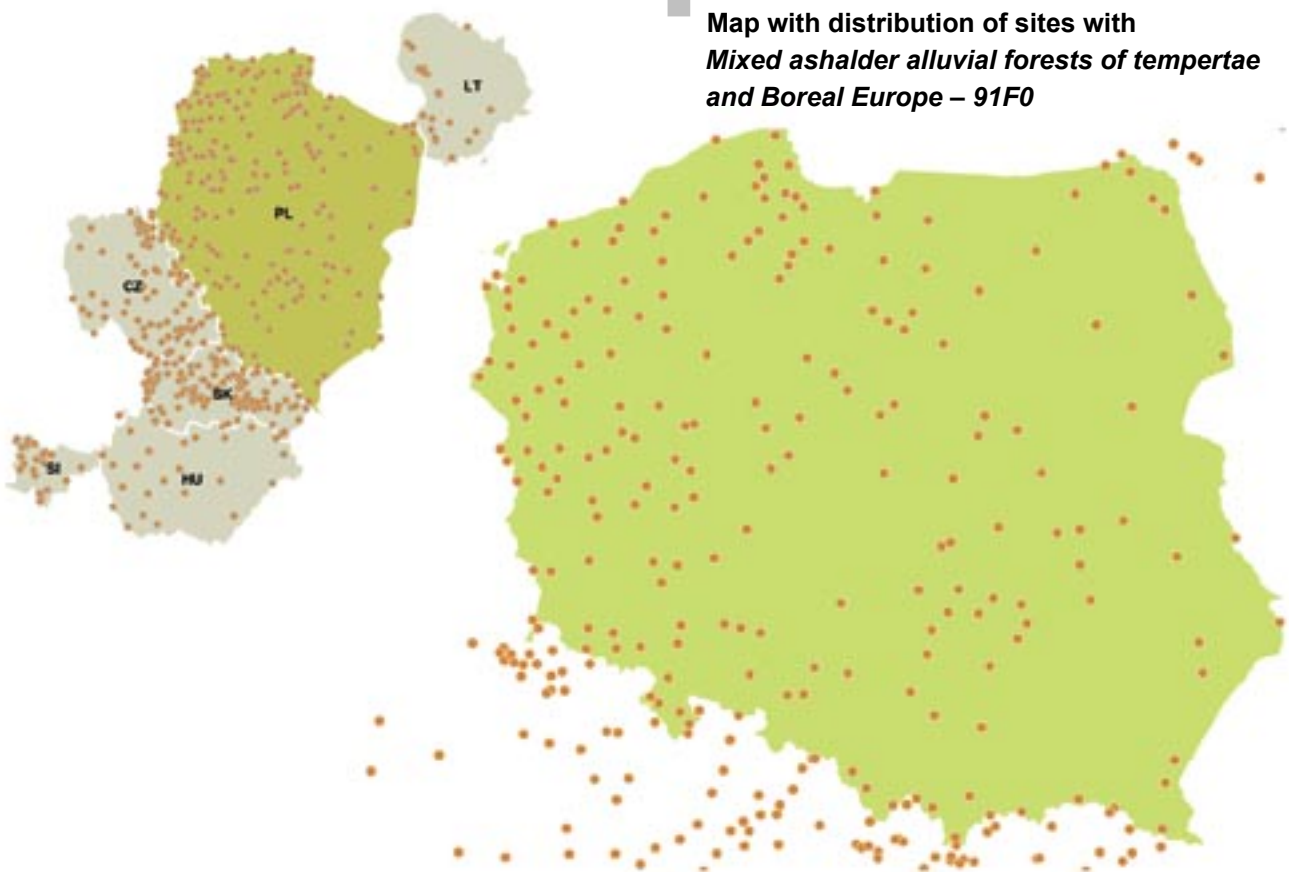
There is a site at Xemxija where there are plans to construct a road as part of the European Road Network. Nature Trust Malta has asked the Malta Environmental and Planning Authority if an Environmental Impact Assessment will be carried out for the project, but to date no response has been received.

## ■ **Conclusions and priority actions**

- An adequate consultation process
- Proper law enforcement and allocation of human resources for wardening
- Allocation of adequate funding
- Development of management plans
- More human resources and greater political will



Map with distribution of sites with *Mixed ashlder alluvial forests of tempertae and Boreal Europe – 91F0*



## Poland

Compiled by: *Katarzyna Nowak*, WWF-Poland with input from *Malgorzata Znanięcka*, WWF-Poland, regarding the Via Baltica

### Country statistics

**Area:** 312,685 km<sup>2</sup> (nearly the size of Germany).

**Terrain:** mostly flat plain; mountains along southern border (Carpathian, Jizera, and Eagle mountains); Baltic Sea coast in the north (shallow areas with sand, gravel and boulders).

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Raczek Elblaskie -2 m, highest point – Rysy 2,499 m.

**Land use:** arable land – 47%, permanent crops – 1%, permanent pastures – 13%, forests and woodland – 29%, other – 10% (1993 est.).

**Protected areas:** 23 National parks (3,442 km<sup>2</sup>), including e.g. Biebrza and Bialowieza National Parks; 120 Landscape Parks (25,692 km<sup>2</sup>); 1,346 nature reserves (1,481 km<sup>2</sup>).

**Population:** 38,633,912 (July 2001 est.).

**Capital:** Warsaw (1,610,000 inhabitants).

### Comments on sites proposed by NGOs for selected species and habitats

The proposal indicates the size and number of sites needed to adequately protect the species and habitats from the annexes of the Habitats Directive that have been selected for this exercise. The sites included in the first proposal elaborated by the National Foundation on behalf of the Polish government, covering some 18% of the country's total area, have been carefully analysed with regard to their natural value, and some additional sites proposed by NGOs. The boundaries and area of some sites from the first government proposal have been either reduced or extended.

The proposed marine sites represent sea areas, including coastal lagoons, sandbanks and reefs, that are important for the marine biodiversity in Poland and the Baltic Sea, e.g. important spawning and nursery areas for fish as well as feeding and wintering areas for sea birds. Knowledge of the distribution of many marine species and habitats in Poland is still insufficient, making it difficult to select SCIs and to define borders.

### Current status of official preparations

#### Status of official list of sites

The official list of Special Protection Areas (SPA) and proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI), that was published on April 5, 2004, is a dramatically reduced version of the first list published in May 2003. The total area proposed under Natura 2000 has been cut from an initial 18% to some 9% of the country's area. The initial list of 278 pSCI has been reduced to 184 sites covering 1,171,600 ha, or 3.7% of the country's area. The list includes eight marine sites ranging in size from approximately 1,000 to 40,000 hectares. Similarly, initial proposals for SPA have been cut from 114 to 72 sites (8.6% of the country's area).

As a result of these site reductions, the present government list of pSCI does not sufficiently cover a representative part of Polish populations for numerous species from Annex II and numerous habitats from Annex I of the Habitats Directive.

Of the 43 species of Annex II plants found in Poland, only 8 species are adequately covered in the government's new proposal. For 6 plant species from Annex II, all Polish sites have been omitted entirely. Among them there are 2 endemic species of Poland (*Galium cracoviense* and *Cochlearia polonica*) that were added to Annex II as the result of a Polish request. For 12 plant species, the main Polish populations are not covered in the governmental proposal.

With regard to animal species, all sites important for the fish *Gobio albipinnatus* (7 sites), the fish *Gobio kessleri* (3 sites) and butterfly *Polyommatus eroides* have been omitted. No one fish species is adequately covered; for the salmon (*Salmo salar*), 8 out of 11 sites have been crossed out. The most important Polish populations of the pond turtle (*Emys orbicularis*), wolf (*Canis lupus*), and brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) have been omitted. Even the European bison (*Bison bonasus*), a priority species, will be protected in only two out of the five sites where this species occurs.

Bird areas proposed by the Polish government do not cover the single site in Poland for *Tringa glareola* and do not contain areas of key importance for *Haliaeetus albicilla*, *Pandion haliaetus*, *Caprimulgus europaeus*, *Aegolius funereus*, *Tetrao tetrix*, *Milvus migrans*, *Milvus milvus*, *Bubo bubo* and *Dendrocopos medius*.

With regard to habitats, the governmental proposal is also inadequate. For some habitats, such as European dry heaths (4030), Oligotrophic lakes (3110), Alkaline fens (7230), Medio-European limestone beech forests of the Cephalanthero-Fagion (9150) or Euro-Siberian steppic woods with *Quercus* spp. (9110), the best Polish sites are not included in the proposal.

The most dangerous decision of the Ministry of Environment is the elimination from the official list of 22 pSCI in major river valleys, especially sites along the Wisła (Vistula), Odra (Oder), and Warta river valleys. This will practically lead to the disappearance of precious European habitats like Rivers with muddy banks (3270), Mixed ash-alder alluvial forests of temperate and Boreal Europe (91E0\*), Alluvial meadows of river valleys of *Cnidion dubii* (6440) and Riparian mixed forests of *Quercus robur*, *Ulmus laevis* (91F0). A possible reason for eliminating pSCI from river valleys is a lack of consensus both between the Department of Nature Conservation and the Department of Water Resources within the Ministry of Environment. The water authorities oppose the inclusion of sites from major river valleys into the Natura 2000 network because they are afraid that Natura 2000 would hinder planned investments and cause threats of flooding.

Also most large forests have been eliminated from the official list, probably as a result of opposition from the Polish State Forests (a governmental agency). This is followed by inadequate coverage for animals connected with bog forests (wolf, bear, bison), forest birds and for some forest invertebrates (e.g. *Lucanus cervus*, *Cerambyx cerdo* and *Osmoderma eremita*).

In short, the list of pSCI published April 5, 2004 is very inadequate. Altogether, about 60 important pSCI have been excluded from the present official list. The content of the list will fail to meet not only the requirements of the Habitat Directive requirements but also would affect the realisation of international commitments related to recommendation 44/1995 of the Bern Convention.



#### IV. National reports and lists of sites – Poland

##### ■ Financing

According to estimates made by the Ministry of Environment (March 16, 2004), the cost of establishing SPA is 30 million PLN (ca € 6.35 million) per year for five consecutive years. It is assumed that 70% of this amount will be co-financed by the European Commission (21 million PLN or € 4.4 million). The National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management and Ecofund will cover 20% (6 million PLN or approximately € 1.2 million), and the national budget will cover 10% (3 million PLN or € 0.6 million).

The cost of establishing sites according to the Habitats Directive, according to the Ministry of Environment, will total 218 million PLN (about € 46.157 million) per year for five consecutive years. It is assumed that the European Commission will co-finance 70% (152.6 million PLN or € 32.4 million) and the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management and Ecofund would cover 20% of costs (43.6 million PLN or € 9.2 million). From the national budget, 21.8 million PLN or € 4.6 million per year will be spent on establishment of Sites of Community Importance.

The Polish NGO coalition on Natura 2000, however, points out that the methodology used by the government for estimating the costs is not clear, and the criteria used are not publicly known. Activities such as education, communication and promotion of the Natura 2000 network have not been taken into consideration. Generally, the impression is that too much money is reserved for the purchase of new equipment rather than spending it on much more needed conservation measures. Moreover, it should be taken into consideration that possible sources of national financing are still not secured.

##### ■ Communications and awareness raising

The Ministry of Environment organised one international seminar with NGO participation in the framework of the PHARE twinning project (PL.0105.02) in November 2003 where several examples of processes of designation from Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Finland were presented, though without comment on the current situation in Poland.

The Ministry of Environment organised public consultations on the pSCI list in voivodships in 2003, but stakeholders did not have free access to the Standard Data Forms and detailed maps for each proposed site. The governmental list was placed on the Ministry of Environment's website in summer 2003, but only for a few days. Since that time, there has been no precise information available on the status of preparations of the list of proposed Sites of Community Importance. On March 16, 2004 the Ministry officially submitted the government proposal for public consultation. The time for response and comments was only seven days, which is far from sufficient to analyse such extensive material. Nevertheless, the Polish NGO Coalition on Natura 2000 submitted an analysis of the proposal. No response to this evaluation was received, and none of the NGO recommendations were incorporated into the government's final proposal.

##### ■ Stakeholder involvement

A number of stakeholders have taken part in the process of site designation: scientists, water authorities, foresters, the general and regional directorates of the state forests, hunters, voivodships, nature conservation authorities, local communities (gminas) and environmental NGOs. The co-operation between NGOs and the Department of Nature Conservation in the Ministry of Environment responsible for the sites designation has been poor, hampered by a lack of transparency concerning the preparation of the pSCI and SPA. In December 2003, the Polish NGO coalition on Natura 2000 was established, consisting of the majority of the largest and most active environmental NGOs in Poland: the Polish Society for Nature Protection „Salamandra“, the Polish Naturalist Club, and the Polish Society for Protection of Birds (BirdLife Poland), and WWF-Poland. The coalition co-operates with other NGOs such as the Polish Society of Friends of Wildlife, Pro Natura, and the Lower Silesian Foundation for Sustainable Development.

This NGO coalition is now developing a national “Shadow List” of sites (i.e. a comprehensive list, extending beyond the scope of this exercise), which will be submitted (probably in July) for consideration to the Polish government as well as the European Commission. For more information please contact WWF-Poland (see contact list). In addition to this, the list can be used by the Polish Government during the biogeographic seminars to improve their official proposal of pSCI. The NGO Coalition is also evaluating the government list of proposed sites and examining the future Act on Nature Conservation with regard to proper implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

Members of the scientific community have been working closely with the NGO Coalition to evaluate the government’s list of proposed sites. Foresters, hunters and water authorities have generally opposed the designation of Natura 2000 sites, and have been lobbying the Ministry of Environment for amendment or removal of particular sites.

#### ■ Management plans

No management plans have been developed to date. However, an international tender supported through a PHARE twinning project (PL.0105.02) is expected shortly to select authors of the management plans for seven pilot areas.

#### ■ Threats to sites

All major river valleys and six other pSCI which protect important habitats from Annex I of the Habitat Directive are not included in the official list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (April 2004). If the list remains in its current form, the likely result will be deterioration of riparian forests and other unique habitats of European importance. The same applies to Special Protection Areas for birds, with omission from the government list of approximately 80 sites that meet the criteria for priority areas and in some cases represent areas that are significantly more valuable than sites included on the list. The proposed list does not cover and protect to the same extent the particular bird species listed in the Birds Directive. For some species, the percentage proposed to be covered by Natura 2000 is too small for sufficient and effective protection.

The Via Baltica. The Via Baltica expressway in Podlasie region is now planned to cut through the most valuable areas proposed for Natura 2000 sites and protected under Polish law as well as international conventions. The expressway is part of the Trans-European Networks for Transportation that is being promoted by the EU (though not one of the present list of 30 priority projects). Despite the existence of viable, and possibly more economic alternative routes, the Polish government continues to promote the route via the vicinity of Białystok which will cut through the following sites: Biebrza Valley (the Biebrza National Park, a Ramsar site, Important Bird Area, and a potential Natura 2000 site); Knyszyńska Primeval Forest (the Knyszyńska Forest Landscape Park, an Important Bird Area and potential Natura 2000 site); Augustowska Primeval Forest with unique Rospuda river valley (an Important Bird Area and potential Natura 2000 site); and in close proximity to the Narew National Park, an Important Bird Area and potential Natura 2000 site.

Following intense pressure from WWF-Poland and other NGOs, the government decided in August 2003 to submit the entire corridor of the Via Baltica in Poland to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The tender for execution of the Strategic Environmental Assessment is expected soon. Despite this, the Minister of Infrastructure stated during a press conference in Białystok option for the Via Baltica would in any case be constructed. Indeed, preparatory work to build the expressway near Białystok is well underway and indicates that authorities are trying to push through their alternative by *fait accompli*. In this light, it seems more than coincidence that the Augustów and Knyszyn primeval forests, two potential Natura 2000 sites that will be heavily affected by the Białystok route, have been eliminated from the government's proposed list of sites.

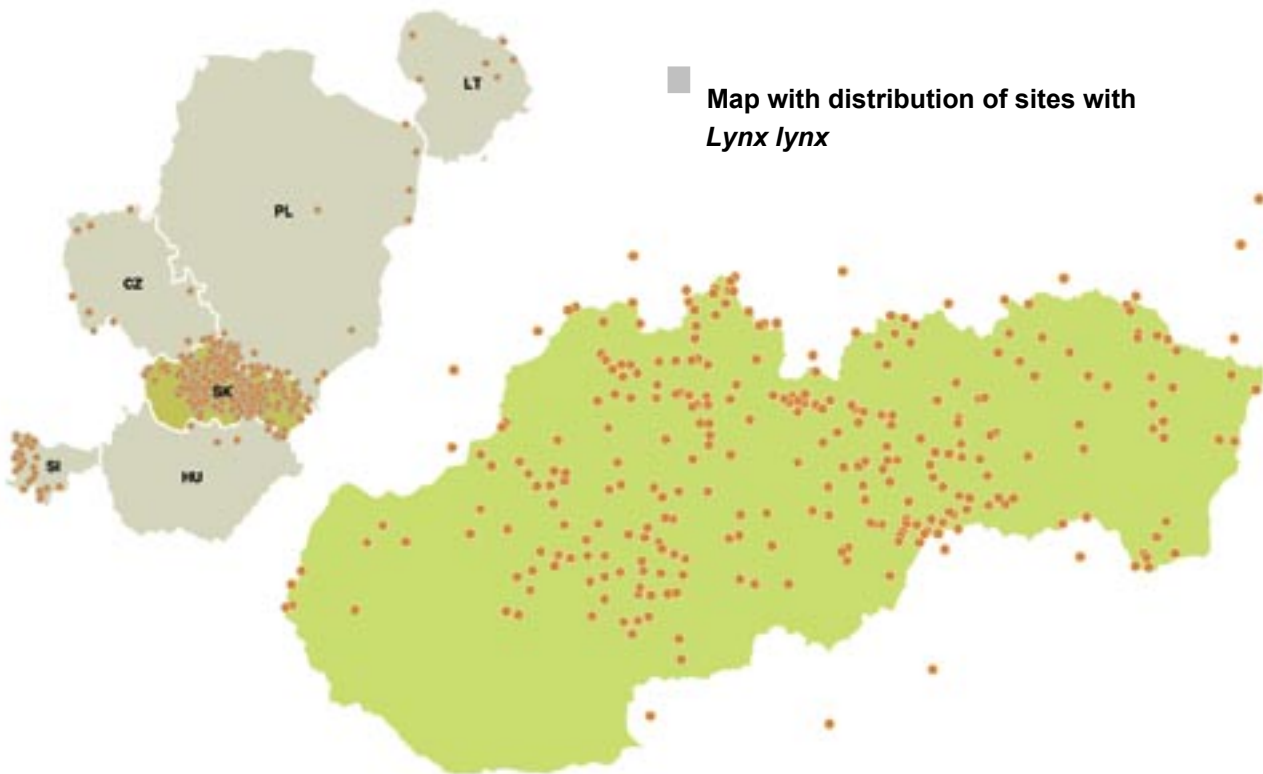
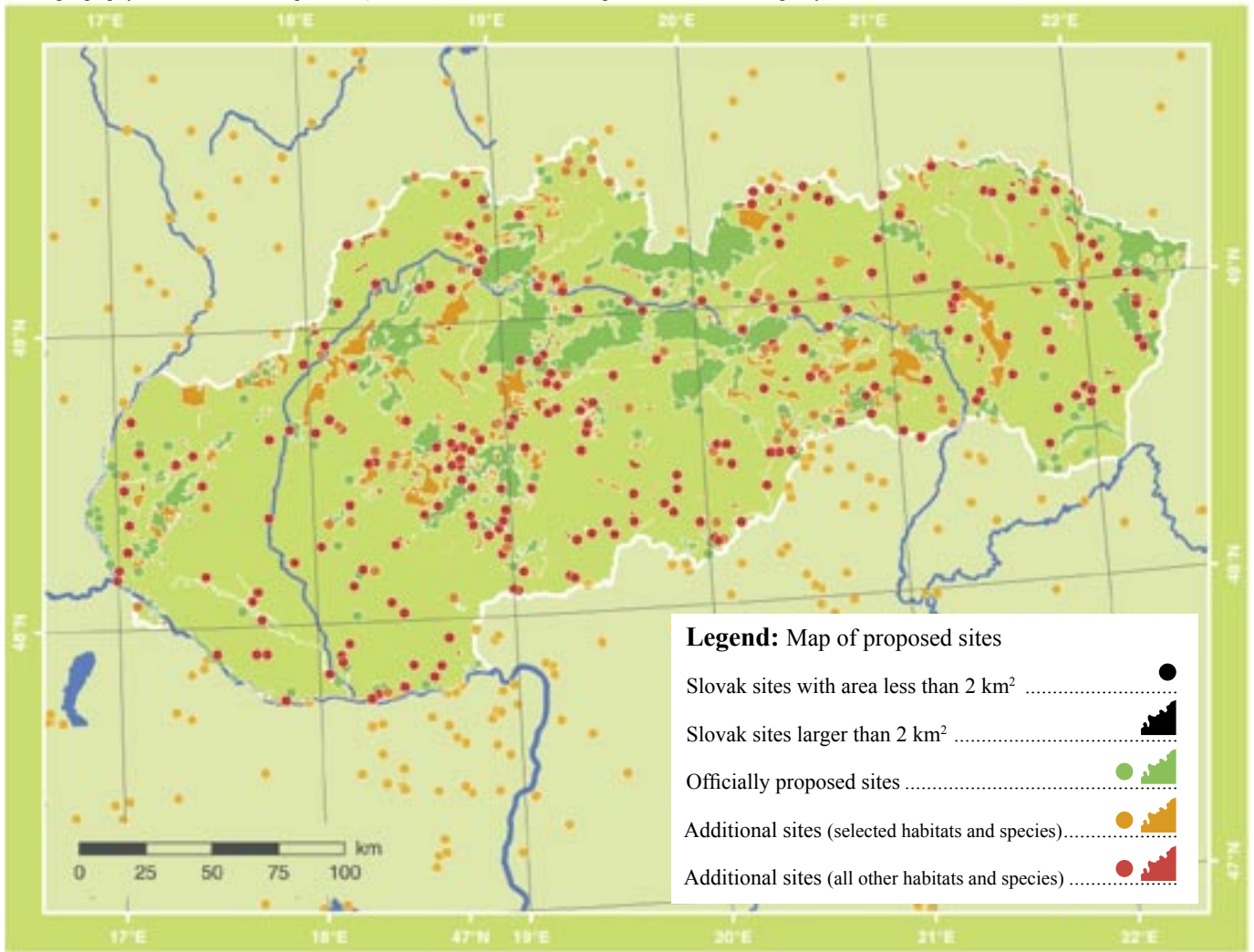
To date, no EU funds have been allocated for construction of the Via Baltica route via Białystok, but the World Bank is reportedly seriously considering financing the project. Nevertheless, EU support through the PHARE programme is currently being used to upgrade an alternative route for the Via Baltica, route number 61 via Łomża – though, it must be added, not to the standard of an expressway, i.e. possible further suggestion that the Polish government is in effect planning a *fait accompli* in favour of the Białystok route.

Proposals for financing 15 projects within the framework of the Oder 2006 Investment Plan have been prepared for financing by the Cohesion Funds, including dams and large reservoirs at Raciborz and Kamieniec Zabkowicki. Together with the planned Danube-Oder-Elbe canal, these projects could threaten 26 potential Natura 2000 sites on the Polish side of the Oder river and at least 2 sites on the Czech side of the border.

Smaller but numerous projects of river regulation, construction of dams and reservoirs are being prepared for support from EU funds. The projects could threaten ca. 50 potential Natura 2000 sites in small river valleys. The precious marine coastal habitats in the pSCI Puck Bay and Hel Peninsula (PLH220034) could be threatened by investment plans for construction of camping and parking areas.

## Conclusions and priority actions

- Add additional sites to the present proposal in order to fully meet requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives Monitoring of implementation of requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives in the Polish Act on Nature Conservation
- Develop a comprehensive communications strategy on Natura 2000
- Improve estimations of the costs of implementing Natura 2000
- Ensure that in follow up to the PHARE project which will develop management plans for 7 pilot areas, management plans will be written for all relevant Natura 2000 sites.





## Slovakia

Compiled by: *Rastislav Lasák, Eva Viestová, Ján Šeffler*, Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology

### Country statistics

**Area:** 49,035 km<sup>2</sup>

**Terrain:** rugged mountains in the central and northern part and lowlands in the south

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Bodrog River 94 m, highest point – Gerlach Peak 2,655 m (High Tatra Mountains)

**Land use:** 49% of agricultural land, 41% of forests land including temporary non-forested sites, 2% of waters, 5% of building areas and 3% of other types of land (1998 est.)

**Protected areas:** 9 National Parks, 14 Protected Landscape Areas, 197 Protected Sites, 397 Nature Reserves, 249 National Nature Reserves, 248 Nature Monuments and 62 National Nature Monuments (all protected areas together currently cover about 23% of Slovak territory) (June 2003, 1st est.)

**Population:** 5,414,937 (July 2001 est.)

**Capital:** Bratislava (450,000 inhabitants)

### Comments on the full list of sites proposed by NGOs for Slovakia

The full list of sites presented here represents the complete list of pSCI – i.e. not only the 24 habitats and 18 species that have been selected for comparison across the newest Member States for this report, which are noted for purposes of comparison with other countries. The NGO list, which has been developed and co-ordinated by Daphne, contains a total of 856 sites, which cover a total of 888,958 ha, covering a total of 18.20% of the country's territory. Comparing this list with the 382 pSCI, covering 11.72% of the country, that have already been approved by the Slovak government, a total of 474 sites must still be added to the government's list in order to fully meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

The most important comment to this NGO list of sites is that it is still not the final version. The present version has been prepared from data that is currently available from mapping, which is still ongoing and which will continue for the next few years – new data will be necessary especially for non-forest habitats (e.g., one-third of grasslands data is missing) as well as species of fauna.

Among the largest areas proposed are Slánske vrchy (22,026 ha) and Kojšovská hoľa (17,921 ha). Worth mentioning are larger mountain areas that have important nature values but do not enjoy any form of protection. These include the Slánske vrchy, Spišská Magura, parts of Strážovské vrchy, the southern portion of the Malá Fatra, Kojšovská hoľa as a part of Volovské vrchy, Považský Inovec as a part of Strážovské vrchy, and others. The NGO list also includes valuable rivers which are missing in the government's list: the Poprad, Hornád, Hnilec, Horná Topľa, Horná Ondava, the upper part of the Hron river, the Ipel', and other rivers.

A number of valuable areas are not included in many of the existing protected areas; they are now included in the NGO list. Among the additions proposed here: larger sites within the protected areas of the Malé Karpaty, Horná Orava, Ponitrie, Slovenský kras, Biele Karpaty, as well as smaller areas were included in other already protected areas. With only few exceptions (mostly small settlements located in mountainous areas), inhabited areas are excluded from the Natura 2000 sites that we have proposed.

## Current status of official preparations

### Status of official list of sites

The official list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) for Slovakia has been received by the European Commission. The future Natura 2000 sites that have been proposed by the Slovak government cover some 28.9% of the country's territory. Much of this substantial amount is made up of bird areas. According to our analysis, a substantial number of areas – 474 sites – are missing from the list of proposed Sites of Community Importance, which only covers 11.72% of the country's territory.

Proposed Special Protection Areas (SPA) were discussed with the relevant stakeholders prior to their approval by the Slovak Government on July 9, 2003. The list of bird sites includes a total of 38 SPA, covering 25.2% of the Slovak territory. Some 55.15% of the territory of the proposed SPA overlap with currently protected areas.

Proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) were prepared and discussed with stakeholders in fall 2003 and submitted to the Slovak Government on December 17, 2003. Approval of the list by the government was delayed for a few months, mainly due to opposition from the Ministries of Agriculture, Economy and Finance. Only on March 17, 2004, after three months of media activities by NGOs, pressure from the Ministry of Environment, and, probably most importantly, pressure from the European Commission, which threatened to withhold Structural Funds if the country did not fully observe EU environmental legislation, did the Slovak government finally approve the list. Among the list of pSCI are 382 sites, covering 11.72% of Slovak territory (86.1% of the sites overlap with existing protected areas).

The Slovak Ministry of Environment together with the State Nature Conservancy are responsible for the establishment of the Natura 2000 network in Slovakia. To date, more than 435 experts from 37 expert governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions have worked on preparation of sites proposals.

### ■ Financing

Most of the activities related to preparing for the establishment of Natura 2000 in Slovakia have relied on support from foreign sources, as funds made available from the state budget were entirely inadequate for the task. Initial activities were based on existing data and additional inventories developed through the Dutch supported project “Establishment of Natura 2000 in Slovakia”. Bird areas (SPA) were identified in parallel to the pSCI. Together with the implementation of Natura 2000, projects on specific habitat sites, like the peatlands project (supported by the Danish government) and the grasslands project (supported by the Dutch government and GEF) have significantly boosted conservation activities in Slovakia.

At present, a positive sign is the increase of support available for compensation measures (from 10 million SKK or € 0.24 million to 100 million SKK or € 2.47 million for the year 2004), but this amount for compensation is still insufficient. The State Nature Conservancy will need to have a clear strategy for the future regarding how to use EU sources and match these to domestic sources in order to ensure effective nature protection in Slovakia.

### ■ Communications and awareness raising

A first communications strategy for Natura 2000 in Slovakia was developed by the Awareness Team that was part of the “Establishment of the Natura 2000 network in Slovakia” project, which was co-ordinated by Daphne and financially supported by the Dutch PIN MATRA programme. The proposed strategy was included in the annexes to the project results and submitted to the State Nature Conservancy and the Ministry of Environment. The basic outline of the strategy was one of the materials used by the State Nature Conservancy and Ministry of Environment to prepare a more detailed communications strategy, including specific activities and financial budget. The strategy, which is to be implemented by the State Nature Conservancy with several important stakeholders, was approved by the internal ministerial committee of the Ministry of Environment in January 2004 but still awaits implementation.

The Ministry of Environment together with the State Nature Conservancy and several other organisations and NGOs have prepared several information brochures as well as a series of conferences and seminars focussing on Natura 2000.

At the national level, three national conferences have been organised by for Natura 2000 (two for experts and one for stakeholders), and four types of brochures have been disseminated to the public. However, the topic of Natura 2000 has been insufficiently explained in the national media, especially regarding its implications. Efforts to prevent misunderstandings and fears have not had the necessary effect.

At the local level, the most important awareness raising activities have been the meetings held during the preparation phases in the proposed protected areas. These meetings provided an opportunity to explain in detail the reasons for and implications of the Natura 2000 network as well as potential opportunities and benefits. Unfortunately, not all protected area administrations used these opportunities fully.

### Stakeholder involvement

All relevant stakeholders from the proposed Natura 2000 sites were involved in the designation process. This is an obligation according to §27, section 3 of Act No. 543/2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection. According to this paragraph, the Ministry of Environment must involve owners, administrators, and tenants of lands nominated for protection under Natura 2000. The Ministry must explain the reason for including a site in a national list, define those activities that require approval of the nature protection body or which are prohibited according to this Act, and inform stakeholders of compensation available for restriction of common cultivation (§61).

To identify all stakeholders, an inventory of the land parcels was carried out and a database of owners, administrators, and users of relevant lands was prepared. A total number of 42,850 subjects on 67,605 parcels were identified. The number of parcels was obtained from the database of the cadastre offices (April 2003). Altogether, 362 meetings were organised, involving 59% of owners, administrators, and users of relevant lands participated. The meetings covered some 79.4% of relevant lands. Of those who participated, 30.94% approved the site designation, 15.77% expressed conditional acceptance, 12.61% expressed disapproval, 38.03% refused to give an opinion, and 2.65% requested additional time to decide. Most of the disagreements were connected with doubts regarding the ability of the State to pay compensation for restrictions.

### Management plans

The existing Slovak methodology for conservation management planning was not comprehensive enough to support management planning for Natura 2000 sites. Consequently, international standards have been used, and management planning started with a review and discussions of a few European conservation-oriented management-planning guidelines. At the same time, new nature conservation legislation that was compatible with the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and other sites of international importance was being drafted. A working group was established comprised of experts from the management teams of the GEF-supported “Central European Grasslands – Conservation and Sustainable Use” project, the Dutch PIN MATRA supported “Establishment of Natura 2000 Network in the Slovak Republic” project, and the DANCEE supported project “Conservation and Sustainable Use of Peatlands in Slovakia”, as well as further experts from the State Nature Conservancy. All of these projects were co-ordinated by Daphne.

The working group prepared draft guidelines, which were discussed and modified several times. The final draft of the management guidelines were submitted in December 2002 to the State Nature Conservancy. A modified set of guidelines has been approved by the Ministry of Environment as obligatory guidelines for the development of management plans for Natura 2000 sites as well as sites of international importance (e.g. according to the Ramsar Convention or World Heritage Convention). The guidelines have been incorporated into the new regulation of the Ministry of Environment which will serve as one of the administrative tools for implementation of the new Act on Nature and Landscape Protection (No 543/2002).



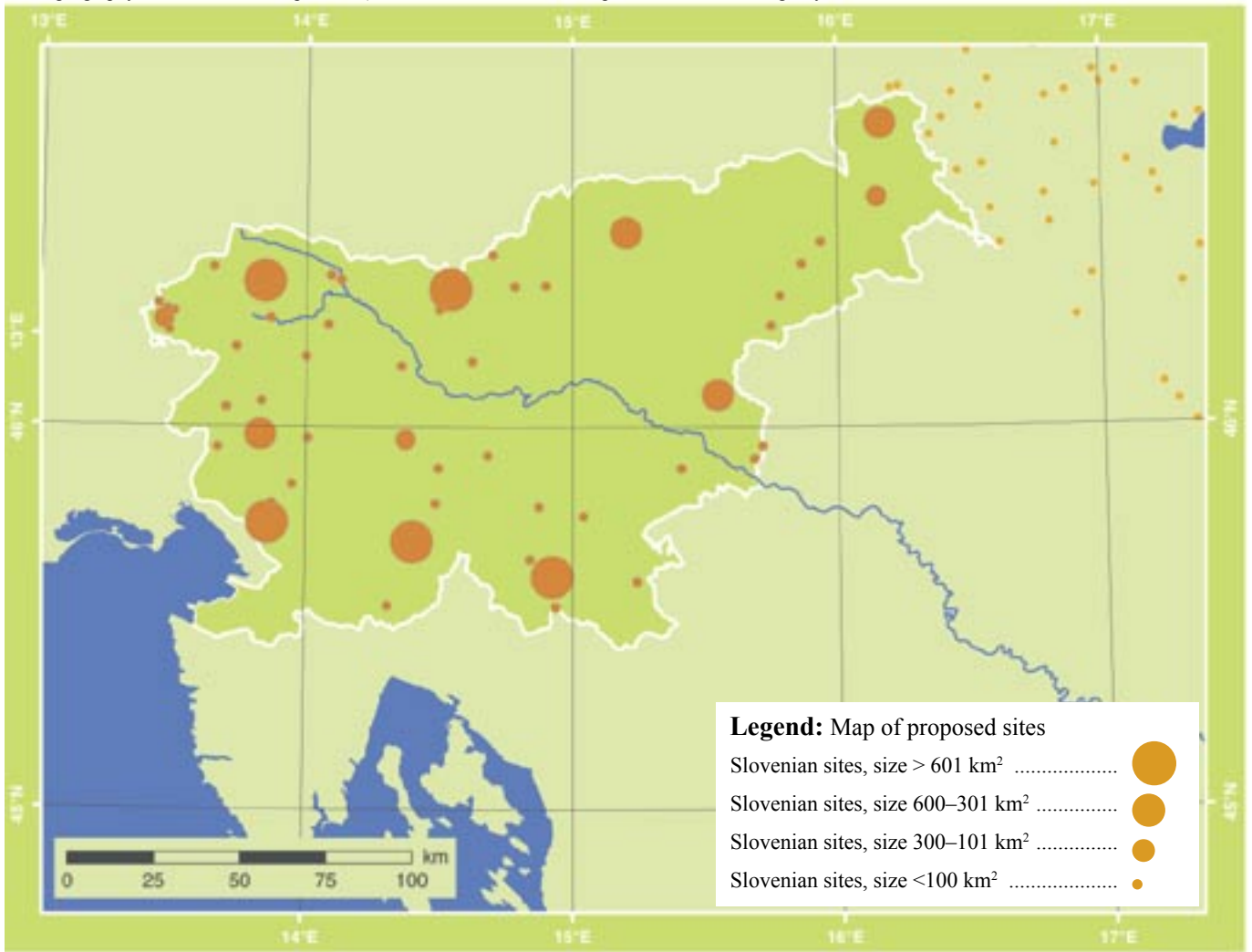
### ■ Threats to sites

The greatest pressure is on the Tatra National Park and Záhorie Protected Landscape Area, which includes the Morava river, mainly from investments in tourism and industry. However, there are also some smaller activities (construction of tourism resorts, highways and roads), which might influence several other protected areas and proposed Natura 2000 sites. These activities include smaller economic and industrial measures, which may impact other Natura 2000 sites in Slovakia, but whose effect is not yet known. Examples of these are water regime control, road and building construction, inappropriate forest management and construction of tourism infrastructure.

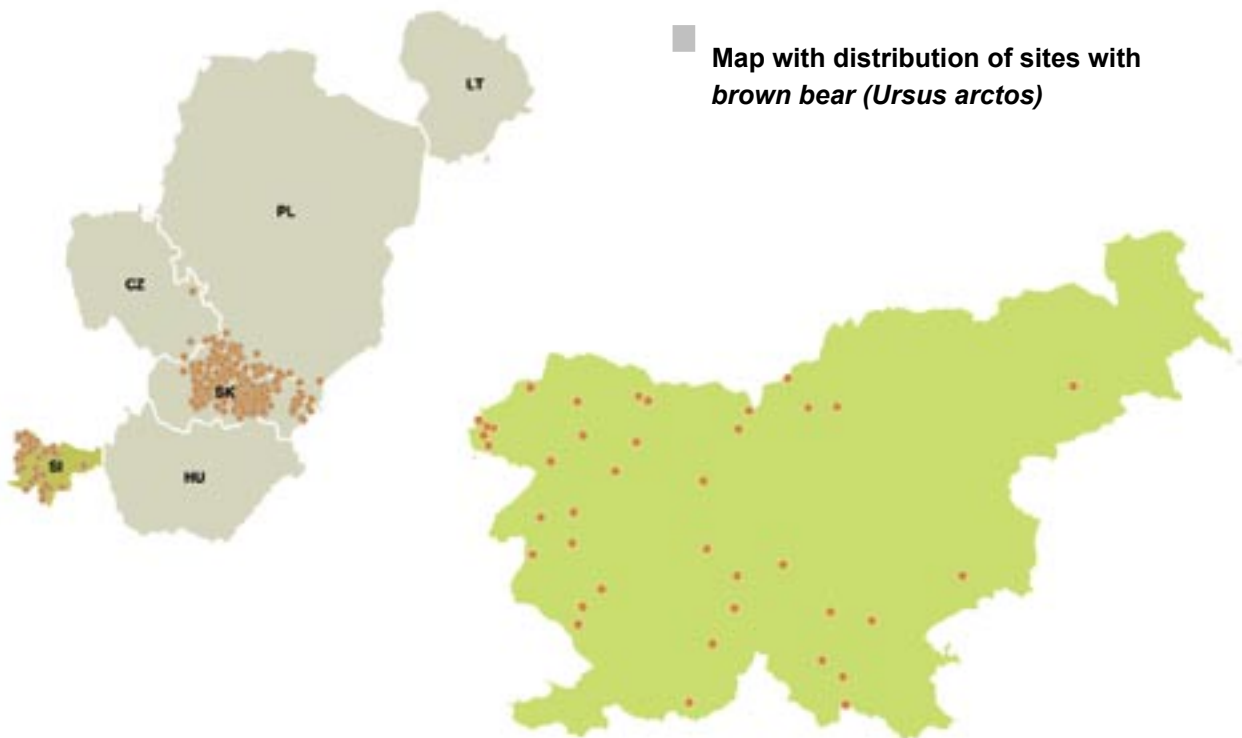
Local infrastructure, which means in fact different projects but is related to overall economic development of the above-mentioned regions, is being co-funded from EU Pre-Accession funds and is starting to be co-financed also from the Structural Funds.

### ■ Conclusions, priority actions

- The State Nature Conservancy should prepare a clear strategy on how to combine state budget with the EU financial resources for proper nature protection not only in Natura 2000 sites.
- 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, one way or another, involved in the entire process of implementing Natura 2000.
- Continue co-operation between several governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in the preparing for Natura 2000 not only until the Slovakia's entry into EU but also beyond.
- Control the proper implementation and designation of Natura 2000 sites; monitor the influences and threats on all sites.



Map with distribution of sites with brown bear (*Ursus arctos*)



## Slovenia

Compiled by: *Pieter de Pous*, WWF Accession Initiative on the basis of research by OIKOS, and with input from *Milan Vogrin*, Slovenian Society for Bird Research and Nature Protection (DPPVN) and *Mateja Nose* from DOPPS/BirdLife Slovenia

### Country statistics

**Area:** 20,253 km<sup>2</sup> (half the size of Switzerland).

**Terrain:** a short coastal strip on the Adriatic, an alpine mountain region adjacent to Italy and Austria, mixed mountain and valleys with numerous rivers to the east.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Adriatic Sea 0 m, highest point – Triglav 2,864 m.

**Land use:** arable land – 12%, permanent crops – 3%, permanent pastures – 24%, forests and woodland – 54%, other – 7% (1996 est.).

**Protected Areas:** 1 National Park (84,805 ha), 2 Regional Parks (15,413 ha), 37 Landscape Parks (60,298 ha), 49 Nature Reserves.

**Population:** 1,930,132 (July 2001 est.).

**Capital:** Ljubljana (270,000 inhabitants).

### Comments on sites proposed by NGOs for selected habitats and species

Though small in area, Slovenia is one of the most densely forested countries in Europe. This and its geographical location make it an extremely important habitat for large carnivores such as the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), both as a core area and as a corridor between the Balkan Mountains and the Alps. This corridor function is reflected in the sites in this list. The most important areas are in the south on the border with Croatia with two wide ‘corridors’, one passing Ljubljana on the west through the Sneznik and Trnovski Gozd areas, and the other passing east of Ljubljana through the Slovenian Alps.

Apart from these large carnivores and their ecosystems, our selection of sites takes into consideration special features such as the country’s intermittent lakes and Karstic rivers. Large sections of the Drava, Mura, Soča, Kolpa and Sava rivers remain relatively preserved, flowing wild and unregulated. The Sava river has been included as a whole. Because the most valuable stretches are located in the upper and lower parts of the river, designation for parts of the Sava include only the water body itself while for others the larger floodplain of the river is included. In a number of cases, sites partially overlap. This is usually done to ensure that certain small areas with special features are included in a larger area of protection. The list of sites in this report is a selection of a more elaborate NGO list of Natura 2000 which includes more species and habitats than just the 18 focal species and 24 habitats that were the focus of this report. This ‘full’ NGO list was commissioned by the WWF-Alpine Programme, produced by Oikos and can be found on the Internet at: [www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/where\\_we\\_work/europe/what\\_we\\_do/policy\\_and\\_events/epo/initiatives/accession/downloads.cfm](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/europe/what_we_do/policy_and_events/epo/initiatives/accession/downloads.cfm)

## Current status of official preparations

### Status of official list of sites

The government's list of pSCI has not yet been officially submitted to the European Commission (mid-May 2004). A map showing the proposed sites, which cover approximately 35% of the country's territory, can be found at the Ministry of Environment's website: [www.sigov.si/mop](http://www.sigov.si/mop). Data for this list, some of which can be found at [www.natura2000.gov.si/projektivec/pregled\\_nalog.htm](http://www.natura2000.gov.si/projektivec/pregled_nalog.htm), has been gathered from available literature and field mapping.

A few weeks before May 1, 2004, farmers and land owners began realising that their lands had been nominated as Natura 2000 sites and the perceived consequences this could have. The protests they organised as a response were directed more at the site designation procedure rather than against the Natura 2000 network per se. In response to these protests, the government sent a map to all municipalities (without any additional information) and gave them six days to reply. Shortly after the unofficial proposal was sent to the Commission, around 50 communities announced legal action against the designation of parts of their lands as Natura 2000.

### Financing

According to recent comments in the media by the Minister of Environment, Mr. Janez Kopac, the costs of establishing Natura 2000 in Slovenia will be 2 billion Tolars or € 8.4 million per annum. In contrast, in 2004 a total of € 284,000 was available for financing Natura 2000, which included money needed for co-financing LIFE projects as well as park management. Strangely enough, the amount allocated for 2005 was a mere € 46,400. The money needed to collect the necessary data for the site designation was insufficient, and only covered an inventory of already published materials. At the moment, there is a small amount of money available to cover basic needs for local promotion activities in the form of brochures or leaflets.

### Communications activities by the government

On the web page of the Ministry of Environment there is information about Natura 2000, what it is and how it works, as well as the areas proposed. Also leaflets about each area are or will be published and put on the Ministry's website. The Ministry of Environment put out a tender for NGOs for activities promoting Natura 2000 with a total budget for the year 2004 of about € 21,000.

### Stakeholder involvement

The Ministry of Environment is responsible for the proposed Natura 2000 sites in Slovenia. Also some other governmental stakeholders including regional offices for nature conservation under the Ministry of Environment have been involved as well as other Ministries (mostly from agriculture). Small expert NGOs have been consulted for specific information and data. Designation of bird areas (SPA) has been undertaken by the Slovene BirdLife partner, Društvo Za Opazovanje in Proučevanje Ptice Slovenije (DOPPS)/BirdLife Slovenia.

According to Slovene law, land owners and municipalities should agree to establishing a protected area and the designation of protected areas should be officially published. This is done for existing protected areas, but often leads to enormous delays in the establishment. For example, attempts to designate Pohorje as a Regional Park have been going on for the last 15 years, so far unsuccessfully. Up to this point few awareness raising activities have been undertaken by the government, and it seems that most stakeholders, both land owners and local authorities, are simply not informed about Natura 2000 and its implications, nor whether their land has been designated as part of the network. The recent signs of resentment coming from local communities is a direct consequence of the lack of a clear and effective strategy for stakeholder involvement.



#### IV. National reports and lists of sites – Slovenia

##### Management plans

The responsibility for preparing management plans lies with the Ministry of Environment. Management plans are under preparation, although still only at an early stage. For some areas that were already protected, like the Triglav National Park (although only for a small part of it) and Secovje salina, management plans already exist in the form of general guidelines. For one SPA, Škocjanski zatok, which is managed by DOPPS/BirdLife Slovenia, a plan has already been developed. DOPPS/BirdLife Slovenia will prepare management guidelines for at least three other SPA within a LIFE project focussed on protection of the corncrake (*Crex crex*).

##### Threats to sites

Large infrastructure projects that impact Natura 2000 sites are taking place or in some cases have already been completed, for example the highway E70 Ljubljana-Koper (already constructed) which cuts through the Karst regional park. A highway still under construction is the Maribor-Murska-Sobota, which will affect a large area of Mura river floodplain soft-wood forest and hilly country in north-east Slovenia, which is both a proposed SPA and pSCI. The planned motorway will also affect the proposed SPA Drava river (e.g. the spectacular Landscape Park Šturmovci, already seriously deteriorated due to draining and the subsequent lowering of the ground water level by ten meters).

In the energy sector, the controversial planned construction of the Moste II dam will, if carried out, have a severe impact on the Sava Dolinka river (pSCI). In the lower Sava river, extensive floodplain forests and orchid meadows are threatened by the planned construction of two more hydro-power plants.

The planned construction of 85 wind turbines on Mount Golič, Mount Vremščica and Mount Snežnik in the Kras region will threaten a proposed SPA and pSCI, the largest dry grassland area in Slovenia, which hosts many rare large raptors as well as several endemic insect and plant species and is a migration route for large carnivores. In fact, the proposed construction site on Mount Snežnik, Volovja reber, has been omitted from the government proposal for Natura 2000 and authorisation for the construction has already been granted. Of similarly great importance and under similar threat are the southern slopes of Trnovo forest and Nanos (also in the proposed Karst regional park).

Lower parts of the Mura and Drava river are threatened by changes in the border with Croatia as well as gravel extraction. The lower Mura is also threatened by plans, although at this moment still in an early stage, for a hydro-power plant.

Mass tourism, including skiing and rafting, is especially a problem in the Alpine region. For example, in Pohorje (both SPA and pSCI), in a ski resort, part of the infrastructure for snow cannons is already developed (including small artificial lakes), and there are plans to further develop ski slopes and lifts. There are also plans to upgrade the forest service road network for the establishment of a 'panorama road', which will have a serious impact on the region.

A special case is the Triglav National Park, which has been proposed in its entirety as a Natura 2000 site. Legislation for a new national park law is now in parliament which, amongst other things, would greatly reduce the core zone of the Triglav National Park and effectively open it for a range of developments that will have a negative impact on the nature values of the area. This would directly contravene the area's proposed Natura 2000 status, and call for infringement proceedings.

Intensive agriculture is already taking place in 50% of the proposed SPA, and this number is increasing. The total area of arable land is spreading at the cost of grasslands. The remaining grasslands that are important, for example, for survival of the corncrake (*Crex crex*) are under growing pressure from intensive agriculture.

#### Conclusions and priority actions

- Awareness raising among local stakeholders, especially land owners and local officials
- Dealing with threats to sites such as on Mount Snežnik, Volovja reber.
- Ensure that all relevant sites are in fact designated as Natura 2000
- Securing sufficient financing for implementation, including development of management plans
- Development of a network of caretakers and setting up a regular monitoring scheme for sites and species



## Cyprus

Compiled by: *Antonia Theodosiou*, Federation of Environmental and Ecological Organisations of Cyprus

### Country statistics

**Area:** 9,250 km<sup>2</sup> (of which 3,355 km<sup>2</sup> are under Turkish occupation)

**Terrain:** central plain with mountains to north and south; scattered but significant plains along southern coast. The distance from the highest point and a certain part of the coastal area in only 50 kilometres.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Mediterranean Sea 0 m; highest point – Olympus 1,951 m

**Land use:** arable land – 10.61 %, permanent crops – 4.65 %, other – 84.74 % (1998 est.)

**Nature protection:** Troodos National Forest Park (9000 ha)

**Population:** 771,657 (July 2003 est.)

**Capital:** Nicosia

### Current status of official preparations

#### Status of official list of sites

Between 1998–2001 a LIFE Third Countries project was carried out which identified the Natura 2000 sites on the island of Cyprus. For the Turkish-occupied, northern areas of the island, the project relied on data from the national forest service and from the personal experience of various officials who had the chance to visit these areas recently and were able to cross-check old data and re-confirm their accuracy. Due to a halt to major building development in the greatest part of the Turkish-occupied areas, this data was still more or less valid.

The LIFE project determined that approximately 26 % of the island's territory meets the scientific standards of the Habitats and Birds Directives for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network. The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment (MANRE) is responsible for designating these areas to be included in the Natura 2000 network. The Ministry of Interior is also involved in the process, responsible for designation of birds' sites and the Cyprus mouflon (*Ovis orientalis ophion*).

In the course of 2002, an ad-hoc committee composed only of representatives of governmental departments, reduced – indiscriminately and without scientific basis – the area of sites allocated initially in the framework of the LIFE Third Countries project to about 14 % of the country's territory. During this process, the Forestry Department also reduced many forest sites, particularly the Pafos forest (only a quarter of the area originally identified is now included), in order to maintain control and management of these sites as forest areas. The Pafos forest, however, supports endemic birds and flora, found only in this site, as well as the endemic Cyprus mouflon (*Ovis orientalis ophion*). The Town Planning Department further reduced the scope of the proposed Natura 2000 network by claiming that some of these sites are 'potential' development sites.

The Cyprus Parliament has recently passed legislation to transpose the two EU Nature Directives into national law. Under this legislation, two laws separate, without scientific basis, responsibility for species among two Ministries – the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment on the one hand and the Ministry of Interior on the other. It also establishes a Scientific Committee to decide on areas and boundaries of pSCI. Consultation with local communities took place from January through mid-March. The Scientific Committee is now reducing the proposed sites even further. After the final decision of the Scientific Committee is made, these sites will be published in the Government Gazette and there will be one month for filing any complaints. The Scientific Committee, after taking into account these complaints, will make its final decision on the proposed Sites of Community Importance to be sent to the European Commission. At time of writing (mid-May) the status of the government's list of pSCI was unclear.

The continuing division of Cyprus presents a special situation for implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directives on the island. The entire island is joining the EU, but the *acquis communautaire* is suspended in the northern part until such time as a settlement is found for the division. Though the LIFE project mentioned above included mapping of sites in the north based on historical data and incidental recent knowledge, there is at present no way of enforcing EU legislation there.

#### Financing

The national budget available for financing establishment of the Natura 2000 network in Cyprus is entirely inadequate. Only 250,000 CYP (€ 424,282.47) are in the budget for preparation of management plans. Since no protected areas have had management plans so far and there are no appropriate organisations to implement them, it is difficult to make a reliable estimate of what the financial needs in fact are. However, considering the original 26% of the country to be designated as sites, one can assume the reserved 250,000 CYP will not be sufficient to cover costs.

#### Communications activities by the government

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment has organised a number of seminars for public information. It has also organised meetings in the area of proposed Natura 2000 sites and informed the public and affected communities.

#### Stakeholder involvement

Governmental departments and academics created the initial list of proposed Sites of Community Importance during the LIFE project mentioned earlier. NGOs were not involved in this project. A governmental ad hoc committee then made a first reduction of the list.

The Scientific Committee established under the new national legislation will make a final decision regarding the list of pSCI. The Scientific Committee is composed of twelve members: one representative each from the Environment Service, the Forestry Department, the Fisheries Departments, the Agricultural Research Institute, the Game Fund, the Town Planning and Housing Department, the Union of Municipalities, the Union of Communities, the Hunter's Federation, the Federation of Environmental and Ecological Organisations, and two experts who are designated by the Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment. Unfortunately, the Scientific Committee is not taking into account the initial allocation of sites, but rather the second, reduced one, i.e. they are starting with a flawed approach for the final designation of these sites. We are also concerned that some members of the Scientific Committee are not scientists with relevant expertise, as prescribed by law.

Information meetings have been organised throughout spring 2004 by the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment in co-operation with affected communities and relevant governmental departments.

#### Management plans

No management plans have yet been written apart from a preliminary plan for the Larnaka Salt Lake (alykes).



#### IV. National reports and lists of sites – Cyprus

##### Threats to sites

Nearly all of the originally proposed sites are under severe threat after the first governmental committee reduced the area to be designated from 26% to 14%. As a result, most sites were either omitted, have been reduced in size, or had their boundaries redrawn, often excluding vital parts.

The following sites face the most serious threats:

- **Akamas** – Tourism and resort development, indiscriminate access.
- **Pafos Forest** – Road construction, logging.
- **Madari Papoutsas** – Resort construction, road construction.
- **Diarizos Valley** – Road construction, excess water drilling.
- **Xeros River** – Excess water drilling in riverbed, road construction.
- **Alykes Lanakas** (Salt lakes) – Housing construction, hunting and illegal hunting, airport, shooting range (last year 55 flamingo's died from lead pollution)

Nearly all of the areas that are close to the coastal zone (Periochi area, Polis-Yialia, Cha Potami, Periochi Skoulli, Kavos Gkreko, Episkopi, Akamas) are severely threatened by uncontrolled development for tourism and residential housing. All forest sites (i.e. Pafos forest, Dasos Lemesou, Machairas, Starvovouni) are also threatened by indiscriminate road construction and increased public access.

Sites important for birds which will be designated as Special Protection Areas (SPA) are threatened by excessive and illegal hunting (including trapping), use of pesticides and housing construction.

Nearly all the sites are problematic because the size of the area which appears to be designated as Natura 2000 will not be sufficient for the adequate protection of the relevant species. Particularly problematic appears to be the area allocated for Akamas, Pafos forest, Diarizos Valley, Xeros River, Periochi area, Polis Yialia, Machairas forest. There are no specific projects yet for which EU support has been committed.

##### Conclusions and priority actions

- Creation of a full and complete list of proposed Sites of Community importance based on scientific arguments. The area has already been reduced, for various political reasons, from 26% to about 14% by an ad-hoc committee composed of government officials, and the Scientific Committee is now pressing for even further reductions in areas to be designated.
- Ensure adequate financing. The Government has not secured adequate funds for these sites. Co-financing should be made available by the European Union.
- Communication between involved government departments to overcome conflicts. Intergovernmental Departments have serious disagreements with each other regarding designation of these sites. Particularly the Forest Service, the Game Fund, the Town Planning and Housing and the Environment Service have disagreements on the approach and procedures which have been followed to date. The real reason is that designation as Natura 2000 will remove control over sites from some state authorities and organisations, including the Forest Department with regard to forested areas, the Game Fund and Hunters Association with regard to hunting grounds, the Town Planning department with regard to development issues and zoning. The goal of these communication activities should be to ensure the correct, adequate and scientific designation of these sites.
- Communication with affected communities and land owners regarding the benefits of the Natura 2000 sites in relation to sustainable development. The public has not been adequately informed about the real implications and potential benefits of the Natura 2000 network, causing unnecessary confusion and in some cases opposition.



## Estonia

Compiled by: *Kärg Kama*, Estonian Fund for Nature

### Country statistics

**Area:** 45,227 km<sup>2</sup> (approximately the size of The Netherlands or Denmark).

**Terrain:** marshy, lowlands; flat in the north, hilly in the south. Baltic Coast with archipelago of islands and shallow areas with sand, gravel and boulders.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Baltic Sea 0 m, highest point – Suur Munamägi 318 m.

**Land use:** arable land – 25 %, permanent crops – 0 %, permanent pastures – 11 %, forests and woodland – 48 %, mires: 7 %, others: 9 % (1996 est.).

**Protected areas:** 4 National Parks (144,204 ha), 47 Nature Reserves (184,451 ha), 91 Protected Landscape Areas (145,100 ha), 221 other reserves (94,290 ha) – ca. 10.7 % of territory.

**Population:** 1,423,316 (July 2001 est.) – approximately one tenth of that in The Netherlands. Population density ca. 33 km<sup>2</sup>, 69 % urban

**Capital:** Tallinn (365,305 inhabitants)

### Current status of official preparations

#### Status of official list of sites

Maps of the pre-selected sites have been published (most recently updated on February 26, 2004) on the websites (<http://maps.ekk.ee/natura>) of the Ministry of the Environment and the Estonian Land Board. Information given on the maps (March 2004) includes the names and boundaries of the sites, but no justification concerning values is included. Also, the maps cannot be downloaded. From February 12 to 27, 2004 the maps were publicly available for local land owners and other interest groups in local municipalities. Any objections or proposals had to be filed by March 5. The number of objections received was high. As a result, the Ministry of Environment announced they would not propose for Natura 2000 sites any privately-owned lands, which owners have officially declared objection to. Integration of Natura 2000 into sectoral planning has been limited – to our knowledge, consultation between government ministries has been limited to communication between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture concerning the Rural Development Plan; no special inter-ministerial working group has yet been established. Most important marine areas will probably be a part of the Natura 2000 network as SPA.

#### Financing

Support for implementation of the Natura 2000 network has been earmarked from the State budget until 2007, as stated in the state programme Natura 2000 in Estonia for 2000–07. It appears that investments both for scientific research and communications activities have not been used effectively, though lack of transparency in allocation of the funds makes clear evaluation difficult. There is a clear need for increasing the rates and total amount of support available for management of semi-natural grasslands.

### Communications and awareness raising

No targeted communications programme has been undertaken during the last phase of site designation in 2003–04. Items on Natura 2000 have appeared in national and local newspapers, TV and radio interviews. Numerous leaflets and posters have been published and two video films produced featuring Natura habitat types. Natura 2000 information days were held with the support of the Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF) in 2000–01. The indicative boundaries of the sites have been available at the Ministry of Environment's website.

### Stakeholder involvement

Designation of Natura 2000 sites has taken place largely within the Ministry of Environment, without involvement of stakeholders. The Natura Council, which was formed four years ago to bring together various stakeholders, has met only twice, the last time in November 2000.

**Land owners:** distribution of information to land owners has largely been the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment's regional departments. Official public hearings were organised at the last minute and only three weeks given for review and comments.

**Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):** the Estonian Ornithological Society was contracted by the Ministry of Environment to analyse favourable conservation status of Annex I species as well as to prepare documentation for Special Protection Areas (SPA). Aside from a couple of environmental organisations which were contracted to provide information to the Ministry of Environment regarding specific habitat types (mainly grassland and water habitats), involvement of NGOs in site designation for the Habitats Directive has been very limited.

**Academic institutions:** Data and information for site designation has largely come from experts from the University of Tartu, who also participated in Natura 2000 field work and compiled the handbook on Natura 2000 habitats in Estonia (J. Paal, 2000). Scientific representivity of proposed Sites of Community Importances has not been evaluated by academic institutions.

**Other Ministries:** there has not been any cooperation with ministries other than the Ministry of Agriculture, despite the fact that the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication are important stakeholders who should be involved. The co-operation between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture has focussed on development of the Rural Development Plan, the benefits of which for Natura 2000 sites are presently unclear. The communication was initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture, for example by involving representatives from the Ministry of Environment into working groups developing specific measures of the national Rural Development Plan.

The only organised initiatives have been the above mentioned Natura Council, which was established in 2000 and left unconsulted since the end of the same year, and the recent cycle of public hearings for land owners.

### Management plans

No management plans have been written specifically for Natura 2000 sites, except for some forest sites. Under the project Protection of priority forest habitat types in Estonia, financed by a grant from LIFE-Nature, 20 forest sites have been proposed as new protected areas as well as Natura 2000 sites. The work with these forest sites has also involved the development of management plans. Some of the plans have been finalised and are waiting for approval; others are still in the process of being written. No other management plans for Natura sites have been initiated.

### Threats to sites

Väinameri pSCI and SPA and Küdema pSCI and SPA: There are two ongoing development projects – Saaremaa bridge/tunnel on the eastern and Saaremaa harbour on the western coast of Saaremaa island. Together, the two projects would create a new transit route across the island and could have a negative impact on these two potential Natura 2000 sites.



#### IV. National reports and lists of sites – Estonia

The bridge/tunnel project will threaten the sites of the Väinameri strait in case the construction will be a bridge, as the area is an intensively used migration route for arctic waterfowl (North Atlantic Flyway) as well as for the local seal population. At the moment, it seems that construction of a bridge is strongly preferred by developers over construction of a tunnel, which would probably have far less negative impact on natural values. The harbour project may threaten the breeding and wintering waterfowl populations.

Number of pre-selected forest sites: There is strong opposition to Natura 2000 from the State Forest Management Centre, which is interested in maintaining large forest areas for commercial production without any restrictions. At the moment, there are complicated discussions going on between the Ministry of Environment and the State Forest Management Centre regarding the number and coverage of forest habitats which will be included in the Natura 2000 network.

The final feasibility study regarding the Saaremaa bridge/tunnel is being co-financed by the EU's ISPA pre-accession programme. The harbour project is being financed by local companies, mainly Tallinn Harbour.

#### Conclusions and priority actions

- Carry out scientific analysis regarding: the total coverage of each habitat and its the importance within Estonia and the boreal biogeographic region; principles of selection of certain sites according to each habitat type (representativity analysis); need for protection and comparison with existing levels of protection (including both existing protected areas and pSCI). Without such analysis, we cannot adequately evaluate whether the planned Natura measures will be sufficient. To date, such analysis has been conducted for the Birds but not for the Habitats Directive. With increasing criticism from land owners and encouraged by the media, such an analysis is of vital importance for justifying site designation.
- Address discrepancies in the new Nature Conservation Act. The new law will enable protection of newly selected pSCI, but the process is two years behind schedule. The law was only approved by the government and submitted to Parliament in February 2004. Nevertheless, in the rush to meet the May 1 deadline for submission of proposed sites, many discrepancies are still contained within the draft legislation. As a result, there is much work to do at the level of Parliamentary committee before final approval of the Act.
- Improve co-operation between the Ministry of Environment and different stakeholders (other Ministries, state agencies, academic institutions, NGOs) from which future work with designation and management of the sites and successful communication work would benefit considerably.
- Improve communication work targeted at land owners and local communities. Widespread criticism and opposition to the Natura 2000 network, including largely negative reports in the press, have been almost inevitable given the hurried process of public consultation. Without improved communications and awareness raising regarding Natura 2000, its implications and potential benefits, the process of site designation and implementation in Estonia is likely to be as torturous as it has been in neighbouring Finland.
- Compilation and approval of management plans for all protected areas including existing reserves and pre-selected Natura 2000 sites. The Ministry of Environment is already facing serious problems with approving management plans for existing protected areas, although some of the plans have already been developed some years ago and there is already a need for revisions. Temporary legal protection for pSCI is planned to be approved all together in one legal act during 2004, but management plans are expected to be prepared and approved one by one. The resulting lag in developing and implementing management measures could result in serious damage to the sites before a clear understanding is reached regarding which actions are permitted on the sites and which are not.



## Latvia

Compiled by: WWF-Latvia based on interviews with the following experts: *Ērika Kļaviņa*, Nature Conservation Board; *Otars Opermanis*, co-ordinator of Emerald project at Darudec; *Edmundas Račinskis*, project co-ordinator (for birds), Latvian Ornithological Society; *Liene Salmiņa*, project co-ordinator (for habitats), Latvian Fund for Nature.

### Country statistics

**Area:** 64,589 km<sup>2</sup> (about twice the size of Belgium)

**Terrain:** undulating plain with flat lowlands alternating with hills, with a mosaic of large forests alternating with fields, farmsteads, and pastures.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Baltic Sea 0 m, highest point – Gaizinkalns 311.6 m

**Land use:** Agricultural land – 38.5%, forests – 45%, lakes and rivers – 3.7%, other – 12.8%

**Protected Areas:** 4 nature reserves, 3 national parks containing reserves and restricted areas, 1 biosphere reserve, 211 restricted nature areas, 22 nature parks, 6 protected landscape areas. 8.7% of Latvia's territory has been classified as Special Protection Areas.

**Population:** 2,346,000 (2002), 37 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>.

**Capital:** Riga (788,000 inhabitants).

### Status of official preparations

#### Status of government list of sites

Latvia was the first country to submit its list of pSCI to the European Commission. At the beginning of April, the Latvian government adopted the list of new Protected Areas developed by the Ministry of Environment. After establishment of these new Protected Areas, the Minister of Environment formally nominated these areas as proposed Natura 2000 sites.

The official list of proposed Protected Areas, i.e. Natura 2000 sites, comprises 336 sites (247 Nature Reserves, 4 State Reserves, 3 National Parks, 38 Nature Parks, 9 geological monuments, and 23 Micro-reserves) covering altogether 11.9% of the country's land area. In total, 122 new sites are proposed and borders of 46 previously protected areas will be harmonised.

Almost all currently protected sites are included in the list of proposed Natura 2000 sites, e.g. National Parks and strictly protected parts of Biosphere reserve. It is important to note though that only 4 marine areas have been included in the Natura 2000 network – and only as part of a larger Protected Area covering terrestrial areas. Nomination of other marine areas has been postponed until political issues at European level are resolved. New inventories, i.e. Latvian Breeding Bird Atlas and Woodland Key Habitats Inventory have shown that still new areas of high biodiversity value might be found outside the proposed Natura 2000 network.

#### Financing

The real “bottleneck” for implementation of Natura 2000 in Latvia is an insufficient budget for the elaboration of management plans as well as a lack of human resources. It is estimated that by the end of 2004, roughly 100 proposed Natura 2000 sites might have management plans drawing on international and local financial sources. In terms of domestic support, most money for management comes from the Ministry of Environment and the Latvijas Valsts Meži (LVM, the state body responsible for state forest management). In many cases, development of official management plans for Natura 2000 sites is not urgently needed as many sites are not presently facing serious threats to their integrity. This is the case for example of some raised bogs.

Limited funding has clearly been a factor in the process of identifying future Natura 2000 sites, influencing both the scope of field work and the process of site designation. For the time being, there are 9 LIFE projects that are either finished, planned or being implemented. Some of these projects deal with management planning and implementation issues within existing Protected Areas; others, on the contrary, are aimed at establishing new Protected Areas or ensuring management in numerous areas. The Nature Conservation Board outsourced funding from the State budget for elaboration of 11 management plans for Protected Areas in 2003. This year, State funding is available for development of management plans for two additional areas.

#### ■ **Communications and awareness raising**

The Ministry of Environment financed and organised a communications campaign targeted at the general public. The campaign, called “Propose a Protected Area”, included calls, published in newspapers, for people to propose sites for new Protected Areas. In response, at least 50 sites were proposed for protection. Also part of the campaign was publication and distribution of booklets to private land owners describing the implications and benefits of the Natura 2000 network.

Articles devoted to the Natura 2000 process have been published in local and regional newspapers. Within the framework of the DANCEE project, 5 seminars were organised for staff of the State Forest Service, the Latvian Ministry of Environment, as well as officials from other public bodies.

In general, communication regarding Natura 2000 still needs to be improved, with special focus placed on main stakeholders, i.e. local municipalities and land owners. This communication should be done in a comprehensive and understandable manner.

#### ■ **Stakeholder involvement**

The process of identifying and designating Natura 2000 sites has been the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment, which organised a special project, running from 2001–2003, to take care of this work. This was the Project Co-ordination of Latvia’s System of Special Protection Areas with the Emerald / Natura 2000 Network of Protected Areas funded by the Danish Aid Agency DANCEE and carried out by the Danish consultancy Darudec. After the first year of the project,

the Nature Conservation Board (DAP) was appointed to supervise and communicate project results and also make a final delineation of proposed sites. This board included representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and the State Forest Service (VMD)

For designation of bird areas (SPA), Darudec sub-contracted the Latvian Ornithological Society or Latvijas Ornitologijas Biedriba (LOB/BirdLife Latvia). The experts were responsible for the collection of data on relevant species and identification of potential sites. The final data sets, i.e. maps and databases, were submitted to the Latvian Environmental Agency (VA) which was responsible for information storage and database administration.

For the designation of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI), the Latvian Fund for Nature or Latvijas Dabas Fonds (LDF) was sub-contracted by Darudec. The experts involved were responsible for collecting data on habitats and species except birds, and designating potential Natura 2000 sites. The final data sets, i.e. maps and database, were submitted to the Latvian Environmental Agency

The State Forest Service and JSC Latvijas Valsts Meži (LVM) were involved in order to provide information where possible species or habitats might be found in the forests. The representatives of the State Forest Service also participated in field work and further discussions in the site designation process.

The Nature Conservation Board was also responsible for negotiating project results with local communities, forest owners and other stakeholders affected by site designation. During local workshops, the implications of Natura 2000 were explained and land owners given the opportunity to express their opinion on site designation and boundaries. In some cases, the result was a modification of boundaries of proposed Natura 2000 sites, e.g. when a valuable tract of forest had already been logged after experts’ fieldwork. In most cases, though, objections by land owners were not followed by the authorities in charge of site designation. Generally, forest owners were less enthusiastic about site designation than farmers and owners of agricultural land, mostly because of lack of State support for the former. Following this series of local consultations, the final updated version of sites was submitted to the Ministry of Environment.



### Management plans

Management plans have not been developed for Natura 2000 sites in particular, but are being prepared for Protected Areas, of which more than 90% have been nominated as Natura 2000 sites. Since 1999, more than 70 management plans have been developed, of which more than 50% are now approved and are being implemented. The quality of the management plans is improving with growing experience. In 2003, development began of 17 management plans. The Nature Conservation Board supervises development of management plans, which then must be approved by the Minister of Environment. More than 10 existing management plans will expire in the next two years and need to be updated.

### Threats to sites

A detailed analysis of current and forthcoming threats does not exist. Based on discussion with experts involved in the Natura 2000 designation process and representatives of state institutions, the following general threats have been identified:

#### ■ Threats outside proposed Natura 2000 sites.

This kind of threat covers a wide range of problems, including increased logging, intensive agriculture, environmental pollution (local and cross-border), etc. It leads to the conclusion that it's absolutely necessary that also outside the designated sites the appropriate measures for nature protection are taken.

■ **Lack of management of particularly valuable grasslands.** With changes in land use, natural succession is taking place and the area of valuable grasslands rapidly decreasing. Still it is not clear how much of these grasslands should be protected and what would be the most suitable/cost-effective management measures.

■ **Construction of new forest roads.** There are plans to renovate and develop new forest roads with a total length of 3,000 km over the next five years on State Forest Land.

■ **Construction of highways,** e.g. the Via Baltica and West-East highway is already being financed by the EU's Cohesion Funds. Further support is expected from the Structural Funds (ERDF).

■ **Overgrowth of raised bogs,** caused by drainage of adjacent areas.

■ **Development,** especially building construction adjacent to river banks and coastal areas on privately owned land.

### Conclusions and priority actions

- Elaboration of a common approach for ensuring favourable conservation status for Natura 2000 sites, ensuring their functioning as a network and not as single sites for single species. This will require development of legislation and incorporation in other sectors (land use, agriculture, spatial planning). Such legislation is needed to avoid major conflicts in future, e.g. infrastructure developments, etc.
- Elaboration of management plans for proposed Natura 2000 sites where this is urgently needed.
- Establishment of a supervising body that will ensure that in those Natura 2000 sites without an administration, such as farm and other private lands, the appropriate measures are taken. This has also been suggested by representatives from the Nature Conservation Board.
- Evaluation of the Natura 2000 network. There are several steps to be taken in order to evaluate the quality of the Natura 2000 network in order to achieve the long-term favourable conservation status of habitats and species:
- Representativity analysis of different habitat and species in various geographical regions of Latvia;
- Gaps in protection, i.e. the extent to which respective habitats and species are presented in network of existing SPA and SCI.
- Additional measures outside existing Natura 2000 network including restoration of degraded habitats and establishment of key ecological processes, e.g. introducing large herbivores for management of selected areas of high conservation value



## Bulgaria

Compiled by: *Ivan Hristov* and *Vesselina Kavrakova*,  
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### Country statistics

**Area:** 110,912 km<sup>2</sup> (roughly half the size of the United Kingdom).

**Terrain:** mostly mountains with lowlands in the north and southeast.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Black Sea 0 m, highest point – Musala 2,925 m.

**Land use:** arable land – 43 %, permanent crops – 2 %, permanent pastures – 14 %, forests and woodland – 38 %, other – 3 %.

**Protected areas:** 3 National Parks (193,048 ha), 11 Nature Parks (247,604 ha), 90 Reserves (81,496 ha), 146 Protected Sites (39,000 ha), 473 Nature Monuments (23,318 ha) – total of 5 % of the country's territory.

**Population:** 7,845,841 (2002 est.).

**Capital:** Sofia (1,220,000 inhabitants).

### Status of official preparations

#### Status of government list of sites

The Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water and its regional units, the Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Water and the Executive Environmental Agency, are in charge of developing the list of proposed Sites of Community Importance for Bulgaria.

According to the Bulgarian Act on Biodiversity adopted in August 2002, the list of protected zones of the National Ecological Network (equivalent to the Natura 2000 network) must be submitted to the Council of Ministers by 2006. The date of formal submission of the list of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) to the European Commission depends on the date of accession to the European Union, which is currently expected to take place in 2007.

Bulgaria has a number of natural values that will be new to the European Union, including the Black Sea biogeographic region, with new habitats and species, and beech forests. The WWF-Danube Carpathian Programme has submitted documentation proposing the addition of two new habitat types and extension of four existing habitat types in the annexes directly to the European Commission as well as the European Topic Centre in Paris. However, an official request to add habitats and species to the annexes of the Directive must come from the Bulgarian authorities. Though no official deadline has yet been set for receiving additions to the annexes, this must occur relatively soon.

#### Availability of scientific information

Certain progress in the development and update of scientific information has been achieved through the Ministry's Natura 2000 project. Occasional updates of scientific information, mainly investigations into the distribution of certain species, have been carried out by NGOs such as Green Balkans, the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/Birdlife Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Herpetological Society, Balkani Wildlife Society, and others.

Overall, progress has been insufficient for adequate preparation of the list of pSCI. Given the present stage of data availability and quality, a comprehensive list of sites could be prepared only for less than one-third of the country's territory. There is a serious lack of information concerning the number, distribution, and national coverage of habitat types in Bulgaria. There are in particular gaps in knowledge about the habitat types of the Black Sea biogeographical region, some widespread habitats such as beech forests, but also rare habitats with restricted distribution. Furthermore, the Institutes of the Bulgarian Academy of Science have not been fully involved in the process, and their capacities and resources not used efficiently. The coordination and information exchange between the Ministry of Environment and Water and other Ministries concerning GIS models and maps of the country, types of land use, types of property, forest cover, etc. is very inadequate.

#### ■ Filling the gaps

The only steps that have been undertaken by the Bulgarian government to fill these gaps in information have taken place within the framework of the Ministry's Natura 2000 project.

To address some of the information and data gaps, WWF-Danube Carpathian Programme has undertaken an analysis of available scientific information regarding the distribution of habitat types and plant species from the Annexes to the Birds and Habitats Directives. Reports with proposals for amendments to the Annexes of the Biodiversity Act have been developed and distributed widely (available for downloading as pdf at: [www.panda.org/downloads/europe/bgn2000report.pdf](http://www.panda.org/downloads/europe/bgn2000report.pdf)). In the beginning of 2004, a discussion was initiated by the Ministry's Natura 2000 project. This resulted in the acceptance of all proposals and extensions put forth by the WWF-Danube Carpathian Programme, which included an addition of 15 new Habitats to the working lists for pSCI identification.

#### ■ Legislative gaps

The Bulgarian Act on Biodiversity, adopted in August 2002, transposes the EU Habitats and Birds Directives into national legislation. According to the previously mentioned legal analysis, the Act on Biodiversity generally corresponds to the Directives and can serve as a sufficient basis for the creation of a National Ecological Network. Omissions identified by WWF concern the Annexes of the Act listing habitat types and species to be protected under the National Ecological Network. Certain habitat types included in the Habitats Directive and occurring in Bulgaria are omitted from the Biodiversity Act and some corrections for the annexes of species are also necessary.

The Natura 2000 requirements are practically not integrated into sectoral policies and programming. Legislation and planning for other sectors have already been developed and enforced. In addition, other sectors 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 protected area (particularly one that has not involved consultation with other sectors), will lead to conflicts.

#### ■ Financing

For 2004 the Ministry of Environment and Water has allocated approximately 40,000 BGN (€ 20,000) from its budget for preparation for Natura 2000.

At present the Ministry of Environment and Water is preparing an application to the PHARE National Programme to secure the continuation of activities after the end of the present Ministry's Natura 2000 project. If approved, the PHARE project is expected to start in 2005. No detailed information about the scope of activities and budget is available at the moment.

The previously mentioned project, Conservation of Species and Habitats in Bulgaria: EU Approximation, is funded by the Danish aid programme DANCEE with a budget of € 520,000 for the period 2002–04. Expected outputs, as defined by the project, are:



#### IV. National reports and lists of sites – Bulgaria

- A systematic network of candidate Natura 2000 sites established in accordance with the criteria of the European Natura 2000 network.
- Increased capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Water, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, their regional offices, scientific institutions and NGOs to carry out inventories and to identify potential Natura 2000 sites.
- Enhanced participation of local authorities and stakeholders in biodiversity planning and management.
- Raised awareness of conservation of biodiversity among public authorities and the general public.

There were significant difficulties in starting the project, which was postponed for almost a year. Due to cuts in Danish funding, the duration of the project was reduced from 36 to 21 months, and the budget was cut to a third of the original amount planned. As a result, not all outputs will be delivered.

The WWF-Danube Carpathian Programme is currently implementing the project Natura 2000 in Bulgaria with support from the Austrian Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, Environment and Water Management and WWF-Austria. The activities implemented through this project in 2003 included:

- Study and evaluation of the distribution on national level of habitat types and habitats of species from the Annexes to the Habitats Directive. Gap analysis of available scientific information, creation of an expert pool, initiation of expert networking.
- Comparative analysis of the lists of habitats and species of the Birds and Habitats Directives with those included in the Bulgarian Act on Biodiversity; elaboration of proposals for amendments and recommendations for future steps.
- Elaboration of proposals for amendments to the Annexes to the EU Habitats Directive to be proposed by the Bulgarian government to the European Commission.
- National workshop “Proposals for Additions of Habitat Types to the European Directives” with discussions, co-ordination of efforts and planning of future activities.

Activities in 2004 will focus on:

- Improvement of the legal basis and available scientific information regarding key habitat types.
- Support for the process of developing the Bulgarian list of pSCI.
- Capacity building and strengthening of institutions in charge of preparation for Natura 2000 and of potential partners; raising the level of expert knowledge.
- Initiation of networking among major stakeholders.
- Ensuring public control of the processes; monitoring of the quality and efficiency of preparation for Natura 2000.

There are a number of ongoing projects devoted to improving existing databases, preparation of proposals for pSCI as well as mapping of bird populations that are being implemented by NGOs, including the Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation, the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife Bulgaria, the Balkani Wildlife Society, Green Balkans, and the Bulgarian Herpetological Society.

#### ■ Communications and awareness raising

The level of awareness of Natura 2000 at national, regional and local levels continues to be very poor. Relevant institutions are not sufficiently informed 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 network may present a sustainable source of income and do not see what possibilities exist in this regard. The reasons for insufficient development of the awareness are the absence of a communication strategy, broad consultations and information campaigns during last year.

There has been certain improvement in capacity and understanding of Natura 2000 at expert level in the Ministry of Environment and Water, several NGOs and scientific institutions, mostly as a result of the Ministry's Natura 2000 project and other smaller NGO projects.

No information regarding a governmental communications and awareness raising strategy is available. Other communications activities related to Natura 2000 that have been undertaken to date include the following:

Natura 2000 Awareness Project South-East Europe implemented by the Carl Bro Group in 1998-99 and funded by the PHARE Multi-country programme – Environment. This was a trans-boundary project between Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania focussed on support for the protected areas network. Target groups in Bulgaria were the national authorities, the Ministry of Environment and Water and the National Park administrations.

Assisting the preparation of Bulgaria to set out the Natura 2000 Network, carried out by the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife International in 2001-02. The project included an information campaign, “Natura 2000 – for people and birds”, which was implemented in those regions hosting Important Bird Areas.

Educational and awareness raising project Parks in Bulgaria – partnership for Europe, carried out by the Civil Society Development Foundation and funded by the PHARE Access programme in 2001. The project targeted the Park directorates (both nature and national parks) in the country. The standard Natura 2000 data forms and an instruction manual were translated into the Bulgarian language, and directorate staff trained in how to complete the forms.

#### ■ Stakeholder involvement

Consultations, involving NGO representatives, were organised during the elaboration of the Act on Biodiversity. NGOs have been involved in preparation and implementation of the Ministry’s Natura 2000 project as well as in thematic seminars at the Ministry of Environment and Water and its Regional Inspectorates. The Advisory Board of the Ministry’s Natura 2000 project includes two elected NGO representatives.

NGOs have supported the Ministry’s Natura 2000 project with data on biodiversity and capacity for carrying out field inventories. NGOs have also started a discussion about national populations of species and

habitat types from the Birds and Habitats Directives. The Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife Bulgaria, for instance, has completed the Natura 2000 standard forms for two pSCI sites. Proposals from other organisations are under preparation.

It is of great importance that key stakeholders are aware of the Natura 2000 network. This includes:

- **Governmental institutions at national level:** Ministry of Environment and Water, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works. Training, capacity building and a communication strategy are urgently needed. This is especially important for the Ministry of Environment and Water, where beside the interim staff of the Ministry’s own Natura 2000 project (3 persons) there is no ministerial officer responsible specifically for Natura 2000.
- **Local stakeholders:** State Forestry Units, local authorities, farmers and other land owners in potential Natura 2000 sites. Except for isolated cases, as in the Kresna Gorge, this group of stakeholders has not been targeted in information campaigns to date.
- **Scientific institutions and NGOs:** the resources in these organisations are still not utilised effectively because of lack of awareness. Continuous information campaign and networking is needed. National meetings of NGOs and key stakeholders that are currently being planned with support from the MATRA-KNIP fund of the Royal Netherlands Embassy should help address these needs.

#### ■ Bottlenecks

The difficulties identified so far for the preparation of the pSCI list have not changed during last year. They are as follows:

- 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 with other sectoral policies. The establishment of the Natura 2000 network is not reflected in planning and programmes of other sectors, including agriculture, transportation and regional development, and will lead to conflicts during implementation.

#### IV. National reports and lists of sites – Bulgaria

- Lack of public awareness and lack of adequate information among local communities – a negative approach and opposition of locals to the designation of Natura 2000 sites can be expected.

##### ■ Threats to sites

**Kresna Gorge** – is threatened by current plans for the construction of the Struma motorway. Recent recommendations, that the site needs to be protected and a negative impact must be prevented, from the Bern Convention Committee to the Bulgarian Government are a positive development in this issue.

**Pirin National Park** – despite efforts of environmental NGOs, a ski zone, including various types of extensive ski facilities, was constructed in the heart of the Park according to the investor's plans and in contradiction to national and international legislation on nature protection.

**Hydropower.** There are new plans – already adopted by the Ministry of Environment and Water – for the construction of about 1,000 small-scale hydropower stations on the middle and upper stretches of almost all Bulgarian rivers. Implementation of the scheme has already begun, and numerous hydropower stations are currently under construction. These plans will affect practically all river-dependent habitats in the mountainous and semi-mountainous areas of Bulgaria. The investors in most cases are private companies from Bulgaria but also for example from Austria.

**Wind farms.** New too are plans for the construction of wind farms. There is a project for the construction of a wind farm next to the town of Balchik on the Black Sea coast. The project has been the subject of broad discussion during 2003. The wind farm is planned on a “bottle neck” of the Via Pontica, one of the two major bird migration routes in the country, and a potential Natura 2000 site.

**Danube.** The project Protection of the Danube and Black Sea Banks from Abrasion and Erosion, which falls under the National Programme for the Reinforcement of the Danube Banks, threatens the biological integrity of valuable natural areas along the Lower Danube. The project includes the construction of anti-erosion facilities along the Danube banks in

seven sections. Two of the sections have already been completed in 2003. The project is managed by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, and financed by the European Investment Bank. No Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted for the project as it has had the status of “emergency works”.

Current EU plans for development of the Trans-European Networks for Transportation (TEN-T) are also ominous. “Removing bottlenecks along the Danube” has been included by the European Commission in a list of TEN-T priority projects of European importance. Considerably deepening and channelling of the Danube, as called for in the Van Miert report released in July 2003, would have a devastating impact on potential Natura 2000 sites along the most valuable sections of the Lower Danube. A feasibility study to this end has been carried out and funded by PHARE, but so far there have been no applications for EU funds for the implementation of this project.

##### ■ Conclusions and priority actions

The priority actions needed for the establishment of Natura 2000 have not changed during the past period and are:

- Improve available scientific information – carrying out of inventories, field surveys, gap analysis, mapping of habitats, preparation of maps, and improvement of GIS database.
- Capacity building for responsible institutions and their potential partners – raising the level of expert knowledge, training, issuing of specialised materials.
- Broad consultations between responsible institutions – NGOs, scientific institutions and other key stakeholders.
- Awareness raising and broad public campaign, work with the media, stakeholders, small-scale pilot projects in proposed sites, involvement of interested groups.
- Adequate funding for the implementation of the above activities and planning of mechanism for financing the future Natura 2000 network in Bulgaria.





## Romania

Compiled by: *Erika Stanciu* and *Maria Mihul*, WWF-Danube Carpathian Programme, with input from the Romanian Ministry of Waters and Environmental Protection

### Country statistics

**Area:** 237,500 km<sup>2</sup> (about the size of the United Kingdom).

**Terrain:** Mountains (31%), hills and plateaus (33%), plains (36%). The Romanian Carpathians, with their three branches (Oriental, Southern and Occidental Carpathians) separate the country into three main areas: Central Transylvanian Plateau, Moldavia and the Walachian Plain). Danube river and various tributaries. Black Sea coast in east.

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point – Black Sea 0 m; highest point – Moldoveanu mountain peak – 2,544 m in the Fagaras Mountains, Southern Carpathians.

**Land use:** Irrigated land: 31,020 km<sup>2</sup> (1993 est.), arable land – 41% permanent crops – 3%, permanent pastures – 21%, forests and woodlands: 29%, other – 6% (1993 est.).

**Nature protection:** Total of 845 protected areas, including 9 national parks, 6 nature parks, as well as 3 UNESCO-designated biosphere reserves (Danube Delta, Retezat, and Pietrosul Rodnei) – altogether, ca. 5.4% of the country's territory.

**Population:** 22,395,848 (July 1998 est.).

**Capital:** Bucharest (2,066,723 inhabitants).

### Status of official preparations

After a brief period from July 2003 until April 2004 during which responsibility for the environment and nature conservation was incorporated into a 'super Ministry' responsible for Agriculture, Forests, Waters and Environment, the Ministry of Environment and Waters has now been re-established as a separate and independent Ministry, the Ministry of Environment and Water Management.

Despite this short institutional experiment, no changes are foreseen in the timing for implementation of the Natura 2000 network in Romania. Reference made in this report to 'the Ministry' refer to the short-lived 'super Ministry' covering environment in addition to agriculture, forests, and water management.

The Romanian Ornithological Society (SOR)/BirdLife Romania has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry for cooperation on designating bird areas (SPA). The list of SPA will be based on information received from BirdLife Romania. A Ministry report shows that standard forms have been completed for 9 sites in Romania. Another 7 sites are described through the Emerald Network, 2 of which already have management plans. In addition, 44 Important Bird Areas have already been identified by BirdLife Romania, which is now collecting information for another 73 possible sites with financial support from international sources. The Ministerial Order no 850/27.10.2003 (Ministerial Journal 793/11.11.2003) regarding the entrustment procedures for the administration or custody of natural protected areas contains provisions that should assist the identification of pSCI. Administrators and custodians have the contractual obligation to carry out an inventory of the habitats and species present in the protected areas according to the Natura 2000 standard data form and to develop management plans.

The Ministry is also developing Methodological Guidelines for identifying and inventorying Sites of Community Importance and Special Protection Areas as well as for data reporting. The data-reporting format will adopt the standard data form for characterizing Natura 2000 sites.

Romania has a number of natural values that will be new to the European Union. According to latest reports, the Romanian government has not yet submitted any proposal to nominate additional habitats and species for inclusion in the annexes of the Habitats Directive.

#### ■ Stakeholder involvement

No consultation on preparations for Natura 2000 has been organised at any level. The only NGO that has actively participated in the preparation process has been BirdLife Romania, which has signed a partnership agreement with the Ministry. One LIFE-Nature project developed by BirdLife has been co-financed by the Ministry. BirdLife Romania has also developed a proposal for a leaflet on Natura 2000 targeted at representatives of the Ministry at the county level, i.e. for the Environmental Protection Agencies, which it has offered to co-finance together with the Ministry. No confirmation for the project has yet been received from the Ministry.

A major constraint for improving NGO involvement in the process of preparing for Natura 2000 is the fact that the Ministry cannot offer funds for any NGO activity or project from its available budget. Another constraint is a lack of transparency within the Ministry.

A seminar on Natura 2000 organised by WWF in co-operation with the Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation in October 2003 led to the establishment of an NGO platform on Natura 2000. The NGO Coalition on Natura 2000 in Romania currently includes 32 members, which are now undertaking a gap analysis of data available among NGOs as well as organising a range of capacity building and awareness raising activities, all focussed on preparing for Natura 2000 in Romania. The Ministry of Environment has shown an interest in working together with the coalition.

#### ■ Availability of scientific information

No significant progress has been made on gathering scientific information. Most of the existing data is in the property of institutions, organisations or individual specialists who are unwilling to provide the information without payment. In addition, there is no comprehensive inventory of studies, information or data that was developed with support from those financial sources that usually fund public studies. Therefore, the Ministry has no access even to information that should be public data. There is no capacity within the Ministry to overcome this situation.

#### ■ Filling gaps in scientific information

As part of a larger project, Romanian Biodiversity Conservation Management Project, supported by the World Bank/GEF, a Biodiversity Information Management System has been designed under co-ordination of the Ministry. The system has been developed should support co-operation and exchange of data between institutions and organisations. The eventual result should be a database and maps that can help identify priority areas for biodiversity conservation.

However, many specialists consider that the Biodiversity Information Monitoring System will only become fully operational in the long-term, with collection of relevant data requiring years of intense work by various institutions and organisations. Lack of financial resources to support institutions, organisations, and specialists in their work may hinder the entire process.

## Transposition of the Habitats Directive

### into national legislation.

#### Legislative gaps

Both the Birds and Habitats Directives have been transposed into the national legislation, i.e. into Law no 263/2001 Regarding the Regime of Protected Areas, Conservation of Natural Habitats, of Wild Flora and Fauna. However, several specialists have pointed to inconsistencies and gaps in the annexes, and these should be corrected. To date, the Romanian Government has taken no measures to address these gaps, but the Ministry is planning a consultation process.

#### Cross sectoral integration

Sectoral policies, especially regarding agriculture, regional and infrastructure development, do not properly integrate or take account of requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives. An analysis and harmonisation process is needed to identify relevant gaps or problems, and to propose amendments to the existing legislation. To name but one problem as an example of many, the law that regulates hunting is not consistent with the Birds and Habitats Directives.

#### Communications and awareness raising

Awareness of Natura 2000 even among relevant public authorities and most affected stakeholders at all levels is minimal. There are currently no integrated plans or actions developed to address this issue in Romania.

Members of the NGO Coalition on Natura 2000 in Romania have begun organising activities targeted at raising awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 with the Romanian NGO community. In January 2004, WWF, the Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation, and CEEWEB organised a Train-the-Trainers workshop for Romanian, Bulgarian, and Croatian NGOs on the Birds and Habitats Directives and role of NGOs in securing their implementation. Additional training organised by WWF and involving Romanian NGOs has focussed on the biogeographic seminars as well as communications planning. Following on these workshops, a series of training and awareness raising activities are being developed under the project Natura 2000 in Romania – Role of Environmental NGOs in the implementation of the European Ecological Network in Romania. The project has been initiated with financial support from the EU's PHARE pre-accession instrument by three NGOs, UNESCO Pro Natura, the Romanian Federation of Speleology, and BirdLife Romania, and in close co-operation with the NGO Coalition on Natura 2000. Several of the Coalition's members have been publishing articles on EU conservation policy and Natura 2000 in their journals as well as the media.

The members of the NGO Coalition are now in the process of developing a communications strategy for communications and awareness raising related to Natura 2000. At least partial support for implementation of this strategy is expected to come from the Romanian Government.

### Future needs for stakeholder involvement

The development of a strategy for stakeholder involvement is crucial. Such a strategy will identify key actors and ways of implementation of awareness raising activities. The NGO Coalition can play a major role in this process as well in implementing awareness raising activities. The provisional list of key actors would be: relevant Ministries and their representatives at the regional level, land owners and land owners associations, administrators of natural resources (e.g. National Forest Administration), regional and local authorities.

### Ensuring adequate financial resources for the establishment of Natura 2000

In 2003, € 300,000 was allocated from the national budget for various kinds of studies related to Natura 2000. This is separate from the funds used for co-financing the LIFE projects mentioned below. The amount allocated from the national budget for 2004 is not yet known (proposals have been developed by the Ministry but not yet approved). Generally there is a lack of transparency, both regarding the total amount of funding available as well as the way the available funding is distributed.

A mainstay of support for work related to implementation of Natura 2000 in Romania has come from the EU's LIFE-Nature financial instrument. The following table provides an overview of past and ongoing LIFE projects in Romania:

Project Title | Beneficiary | Duration

1. In situ Conservation of the Romanian Meadow Viper (*Vipera ursinii*) | Danube Delta Research and Design National Institute | 10.1999–01.2002

2. Iron Gates Natural Park – Habitat Conservation and Management | University of Bucharest/CCMESI | 06.2001–11.2004

3. Functional Ecological Network in Central Transylvania Plain | Environmental Protection Inspectorate, Cluj | 08.2001–11.2004

4. Conservation Programme for Bats' Underground Habitats in SW Carpathians | Green Cross Romania and GESS | 08.2001–08.2004

5. Conservation of Dolphins from Romanian Black Sea Waters | National Institute for Marine Research and Development "Grigore Antipa" | 07.2001–06.2004

6. In Situ Conservation of Large Carnivores in Vrancea County | Environmental Protection Inspectorate Vrancea | 09.2002–11.2005

7. Restoration of Comana Wetland | Forest Research and Management Institute | 03.2002–06.2004

8. Conservation of the Natural Wet Habitat of Satchinez | Environmental Protection Inspectorate Timisoara | 10.2002–10.2005

9. Natura 2000 Sites in the Piatra Craiului National Park | Piatra Craiului National Park Administration | 08.2003–07.2006

10. Restoration of Forested Habitats from Pietrosul Rodnei Biosphere Reserve | Forest Research and Management Institute, Bucharest | 06.2003–06.2007

11. Participatory Management of Măcin Mountains Protected Area | Environmental Protection Inspectorate Tulcea | 07.2003–06.2006

The EU's PHARE Cross-Border Co-operation (CBC) pre-accession instrument has also been useful for supporting preparations for implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives. Approved projects (2003) include:

Promotion of Sustainable Development and Conservation of Biodiversity in Bulgarian-Romanian Cross Border Region (€ 2.25 million, project PHARE RO 2003/005-701.04).

Romanian Hungarian Corridor for Biodiversity Conservation (€ 1.95 million, project PHARE RO-2003/005-702.01).

Protection of Wetlands of the Danube – a pilot project for Cama-Dinu islet area (RO0103.03) – begun in January 2004, will contribute to implementation of Natura 2000 by contributing to identification of potential Natura 2000 sites around the Cama-Dinu islets as well as raising understanding and awareness of local stakeholders regarding the area's biodiversity and Natura 2000.



#### IV. National reports and lists of sites – Romania

##### Other financial sources

A project financed by the Dutch government through Senter International called *Implementation of the EU Nature Conservation Legislation in Romania* completed the conception phase in April 2001. It will run for three years, is carried out by a consortium of Dutch consultancies and WWF-Danube Carpathian Programme and has the following expected outcomes:

- Institutional and organisational structure strengthened for the implementation of the Birds- and Habitats Directive, including improved knowledge in the field of the EU Directive.
- Relevant species and habitats for Romania selected, species distribution and habitat maps prepared.
- List of sites of Community Importance (SCI) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) ready, described in Standard Forms and inserted in the Database conform EU Directives.
- (Blueprint) management plan elaborated on N2000 sites, if possible implementation with a pilot project
- Information campaign developed for the public (and partly implemented) in the field of the meaning and the importance of Natura 2000.

##### Bottlenecks

Capacity at the level of the Ministry is extremely low at the moment (only one person who spends part of it's time on Natura 2000). Three new experts will soon establish a national nature protection agency with 8 regional offices which will have a department that will be responsible for implementing Natura 2000.

Lack of knowledge/awareness among stakeholders such as land owners, land users, local officials, especially at the regional and local level.

The main problem is the non-transparent distribution of the existing (possibly scarce) funds. As a result of this lack of transparency it is difficult to assess if the funding is enough and if the distribution is done correctly.

Difficulty for NGOs and other stakeholders to access existing information and a general lack of transparency on the site designation process and the results.

Among promising steps is the fact that, since October 2003, NGOs, often consisting of ecological experts, have become much more active in preparing for Natura 2000 and are organising their contribution through the NGO Coalition on Natura 2000 in Romania.

##### Threats to sites

The route of the Targu Mures-Dumbravita highway initially was planned to pass through the Dumbravita Important Bird Area. SOR/Birdlife Romania, the Faculty of Forestry and the Romanian Academy have managed to secure a change in the planned route that would not affect this potential Natura 2000 site.

There is currently no information available on major plans or projects that could threaten possible Natura 2000 sites. In December 2003, the NGO Coalition requested the Romanian Government to provide a list of planned highway projects, but to date no reply to this request has been received.

Apart from the IBAs identified by and available at SOR/BirdLife and 7 Emerald sites there is no estimation or map of potential Natura 2000 sites. With no information about either infrastructural projects or the location of potential Natura 2000 sites it is difficult to identify threats at this point

##### Conclusions and priority actions

- Ensure adequate allocation of resources at the ministry level for implementation of Natura 2000.
- Develop and implement a strategy for awareness raising on Natura 2000 targeted at key stakeholders.
- Identify existing information, gap analysis and preliminary map of potential pSCI.
- Develop project proposals and identify funding for studying the identified priority areas and fill in the standard forms for those that qualify as pSCI.



## Annexes

- I. Habitats and species covered in this report
- II. Lists of sites per country
- III. Links and information sources

## Annex I: Selected habitats and species covered in this report

Code	Habitats	Prior- ity	
1110	Sandbanks slightly covered by sea water all the time		marine & shore
1150	Coastal lagoons		
1170	Reefs		
1230	Vegetated sea cliffs		
2120	Shifting dunes along the shoreline		
3130	Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters		freshwater
3160	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds		
3220	Alpine rivers and its vegetation		
4030	European dry heath		heaths
6120*	Xeric sand calcareous grasslands	•	grasslands
6210*	Semi-natural dry grassland/scrubland on calcareous substrates	•	
6240*	Sub-pannonic steppic grassland	•	
6510*	Lowland hay meadows	•	
6530	Fennoscandinavian wooded meadows		
7110*	Active raised bogs	•	
7140	Transition mires and quaking bogs		mires, bogs
7220*	Petrifying springs with tufa formation	•	
8310	Caves not open to the public		rocks and caves
9020	Natural old broad-leaved deciduous forests with epiphytes		forests
9180*	Tilio-Aceron forests of slopes, screes and ravines	•	
91E0	Mixed ash-alder alluvial forests		
91F0	Riparian mixed forests along the great rivers		
91H0*	Pannonian woods with <i>Quercus pubescens</i>	•	
9410	Acidophilus <i>Picea</i> forests of the mountain to alpine levels		

Code	Species	Prior- ity
1188	<i>Bombina bombina</i>	
1163	<i>Cottus gobio</i>	
1902	<i>Cypridium calceolus</i>	
1120	<i>Emys orbicularis</i>	
1096	<i>Lampetra planeri</i>	
1903	<i>Liparis loeselii</i>	
1355	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	
1361	<i>Lynx lynx</i>	
1061	<i>Maculinea nausithous</i>	
1029	<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	
1084*	<i>Osmoderma eremita</i>	•
1910	<i>Pteromys volans</i>	
1477	<i>Pulsatilla patens</i>	
1303	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	
1106	<i>Salmo salar</i>	
1528	<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i>	
1335	<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>	

## Annex II: List of sites per country

### Key to tables

Column	Description
Id	Code of site
Name of Site	English and national names of site separated by
Size	size of the site in km <sup>2</sup>
BG	biogeographical region (see table below)
Longitude	longitude of a centroid of the site (degrees and minutes E)
Latitude	latitude of a centroid of the site (degrees and minutes N)
Hxxx	habitats – presence indicated by • (see Annex I)
Sxxx	species – presence indicated by • (see Annex I)

### Key to biogeographical regions

Abbreviation	Region
A	Alpine
B	Boreal
C	Continental
P	Pannonic





































**Malta**

Natura 2000 sites proposed by Nature Trust Malta, february 2004

Site name	Site description	Island
1. Dwejra	A candidate World Heritage Site and proposed as a marine reserve and National Park; rich in archaeological, historical, ecological, geological (extensive fossil beds) and geomorphological features (amongst others, a triad of Miocene collapse depressions). An area of High Landscape Value and defined as a Coastline of International Value. Also a prime touristic and diving destination. Holds numerous endemic/rare and legally protected species. An islet in the area (Fungus Rock) also supports interesting flora as well as an endemic lizard. Also holds one of the few perennial freshwater pools of the islands.	Gozo
2. San Dimitri	Important for its ecologically rich rupestral habitats and considered as a site of scientific importance which is also of geological interest. The rare and endemic <i>Cremnophyton lanfancai</i> grows along the cliffs.	Gozo
3. Wied il-Ghasri	The area, together with area 4, is of high landscape value and of geomorphological interest. This small river valley continues underwater and its mouth is characterised by a pebble beach (locally uncommon shore type). Maritime vegetation holds some rare plant species.	Gozo
4. Xwejni-Qbajjar area	Area has historical tradition of salt pan industry. A site of great geomorphological interest both above land and underwater. Rare species of plants are encountered.	Gozo
5. Ramla l-Hamra	Probably the best preserved site supporting a locally very rare type of habitat – sand dunes. Numerous rare, endangered and/or endemic species of plants and sand dune animals have been recorded here. Also a site of historical, hydrological and great scenic value. An area of heavy human pressure in summer months.	Gozo
6. Qortin ta' Isopu, Tal-Magun, Il-Kbir	A system of valleys and coralline limestone plateaux hold what is probably the best local example of a mature garigue habitat with healthy populations of otherwise rare plants such as <i>Cistus</i> sp. and <i>Iris pseudopumila</i> . Under threat by nearby quarrying activities.	Gozo
7. Mgarr ix-Xini and Wied Hanzira	A highly picturesque valley which is of great naturalistic value both as a habitat for maquis and garigue vegetation (with a good number of very rare plants) as well as numerous bird species which find shelter here. Mgarr ix-Xini Bay is a suggestive diving site with its fjord-like appearance and intricate system of underwater caves.	Gozo
8. Ta' Cenc Cliffs	The Lower Coralline cliffs from Wied is-Sabbara all the way to Xlendi are of great scenic importance and of high ecological value supporting rupestral and garigue vegetation with several endemic plant species. It also supports the largest local colony of Cory's Shearwater and is also one of the best breeding sites for other smaller birds. Under threat by a proposed golf course and by trapping and hunting activities.	Gozo
9. Xlendi – Valley and Kantra area	The Xlendi-Lunzjata valley system is one of the most important on the islands having a permanent watercourse supporting an endemic freshwater crab and other very rare freshwater organisms. The area is thus of great scientific and ecological value also due to the fact that several rare plant species have been recorded. The valley is also valuable for its bat populations and for giving temporary refuge to migrating birds.	Gozo
10. the islands of Comino and Cominotto	Comino is officially a nature reserve where hunting cannot be practised. The Island is used as a base for international bird research of migratory species (operated by a local NGO). Comino boasts a rich and mature garigue supporting some 10 endemic/sub-endemic plant species as well as other rare species with a restricted distribution in the Mediterranean region or in the Maltese Islands. It also supports a small sand dune and remnants of a marshland (which could benefit greatly from ecological restoration).	Comino and Cominotto
11. White Tower Bay	Ecologically important a site hosts one of the last remaining sand dunes on the Island with several species of scientific importance and of very restricted local distribution (sandy beaches make up less than 2.5 % of the coastline). Nature Trust is actively participating in the management and protection of the site.	Malta
12. Rđum il-Qammieħ/ Rđum il-Qawwi/ Paradise Bay	An area which comprises several important habitats such as boulder scree, clay steppe maritime garigue, sandy beach and a small temporary saline marshland all of which are in a relatively pristine state and therefore giving shelter to a variety of species. The area is also a geological paradise with clear examples of stratigraphy, scientifically important fossil beds and a large solution subsidence structure.	Malta
13. Ta'Pennellu/Gnien Ingraw (Mellieħa)	One of the very few localities in the Maltese Islands which supports a healthy wild population of the Sandarac Gum Tree ( <i>Tetraclinis articulata</i> ) – the National Tree – considered as rare on a European level and as such granted international protection. A population of the locally rare <i>Iris pseudopumila</i> and fine garigue is found near to Ta Pennellu whilst Gnien Ingraw is also important as it holds a permanent freshwater supply in its valley.	Malta
14. Selmun, Mgiebah towards Ghanj Zejtuna	The rugged coast here holds a myriad of habitats such as a rare type of garigue dominated by <i>Cistus</i> species and harbouring numerous rare and endemic plants, boulder scree, coastal clay slopes, highly rare remnants of old oak woodland and associated species.	Malta
15. Wardija/San Martin	The site at Wardija includes some fine and old Evergreen Oak trees (possibly over 900 years of age) – remnants of the original Mediterranean sclerophyll woodland; as well as rare garigue and Mediterranean maquis species. San Martin's permanent freshwater spring supports the rare endemic Maltese Freshwater Crab.	Malta
16. Ramla tal-Mixquqa (Golden Bay)	A sandy beach with a high degree of anthropogenic impacts. The site of a once more widespread sand dune	Malta
17. Ghajn Tuffieħa	The bay (adjacent to No.16) is also a sandy beach with a sand dune and impressive clay slopes. Site of a current management project by a local NGO.	Malta
18. Il-Karraba	Unique headland of great scenic beauty and geomorphological interest. Also the type locality of an endemic pseudoscorpion.	Malta
19. Fomm ir-Rih Basy and Wied Gerzuma, Wied tal Bahrija	Fomm ir-Rih Bay is located at the edge of the main Great Fault dividing Malta and exhibits interesting syncline features. Ecologically the bay is unique for its pebble beach, its clay slopes and boulder scree habitats and pristine vegetation. Wied Gerzuma and Wied Bahrija are within the same area and both are of high scientific and ecological importance for being the type localities of several rare and endangered species. The Bahrija Valley supports the largest population of the Maltese Freshwater Crab as well as other freshwater species requiring a permanent spring.	Malta
20. Ta'Baldzu/ Wied Hazrun	One of the four localities supporting a few old Evergreen Oaks as well as rare maquis species. The site requires immediate protection which should be considered a high priority also for the other sites holding copses of oak.	Malta
21. Buskett and Wied il-Luq	This is practically the only semi-natural woodland of a comparatively large size and which represents a rare ecosystem in the local context. The valley, Wied il-Luq, is one of the few riparian habitats and is ecologically important not just for supporting a good number of otherwise rare trees (Poplar and Ash), but also the only local amphibian, freshwater species and a rare iris. The woodland is a highly important resting and feeding ground for large numbers of migratory species – especially birds of prey whilst the higher rocky ground supports maquis and garigue which is largely self-regenerating and which supports several rare species of orchids and other plants.	Malta
22. Wied il-Għasel (and nearby Tal Wej)	A valley supporting temporary freshwater habitats along the valley bed and a rich garigue/maquis along its sides. Several rare and/or endemic species are found here including the National Tree ( <i>Tetraclinis articulata</i> ) and a number of freshwater organisms (especially in the karstic freshwater pools at Tal-Wej). The valley is endangered by encroaching development and quarrying activities.	Malta
23. Pembroke garrigue and Wied Harq Hammiem	The garigue at Pembroke has been recognized as a site of ecological importance as it supports several rare species (such as orchids) as well as maritime communities. Wied Harq Hammiem is close to a main leisure and touristic resort but still harbours an interesting variety of very rare species such as <i>Aristolochia clusii</i> . This valley also holds an underground freshwater cave which is unique in its kind for the Maltese Islands.	Malta

24. Maghlaq valley and coast to Ras il Hamrija	All the coast from Ghar Lapsi to Maghlaq valley and towards Wied iz-Zurrieq can be considered as a coastline of great scientific and geological importance. The rugged beauty of this coast is as yet quite free from major developments (although it has been proposed that a major landfill be sited just next to Wied Maghlaq and close to a World Heritage prehistoric temple site) and supports maritime communities as well as garigue which is fast regenerating after a great reduction of grazing activities with species such as <i>Periploca angustifolia</i> on the increase. The rare <i>Scilla sicula</i> (a sub-endemic) is also found in this area.	Malta
25. Il-Maqluba	A highly interesting solution subsidence structure which was highlighted as one of the first known localities in the Maltese Islands where the rare Sandarac Gum Tree ( <i>Tetraclinis articulata</i> ) was found growing wild along its cliff face which also supports an established population of the endemic Maltese Salt-Tree ( <i>Darniella melitensis</i> ) and serves as a breeding ground for the National Bird of Malta – the Blue Rock-thrush ( <i>Monticola solitarius</i> ). This is also one of the few localities where a copse of Bay Laurel grows wild.	Malta
26. Wied Babu	This scenic valley is highly important for its rupestral and maquis/garigue habitats which comprise several species of rare distribution and of scientific interest such as <i>Coronilla valentina</i> , a number of rare orchids, the National plant ( <i>Palaeocyamus crassifolius</i> ) etc. as well as established mature shrubs of <i>Erica multiflora</i> and <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> and large specimens of <i>Ceratonia siliqua</i> .	Malta
27. Filfla	This islet is a nature reserve which is of great ecological and scientific importance both for its endemic forms as well as for its role as a major breeding site (on a Mediterranean scale) for the Storm Petrel ( <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i> ) as well as supporting other marine birds. An endemic lizard and two endemic land snails are only known from this islet.	Filfla
28. Wied Zembaq/Saptan	The valley system leading to Marsaxlokk Bay supports a population of the very rare Wild Pear.	Malta
29. Il-Maghluq ta' Mxlokk	A restored saline marshland managed by Nature Trust. Although small in size, it is of great ecological and scientific value as it is one of the only two similar habitats found in the South of the Islands and shows variation from the other (very few) saltmarsh localities in the North. This habitat is one of the rarest in the Maltese Islands (together with sand dunes) and holds some species which only survive in this marsh. This is also the type locality for an endemic brackish water snail.	Malta
30. Munxar	The headland of Munxar is of geological interest for its locally unique cliffs and for its Pleistocene deposits. It supports a typical maritime garigue and rupestral habitat with a thriving population of the endemic <i>Darniella melitensis</i> and also the site of endemic insects.	Malta















Slovakia

Sites for selected habitats nad species included in the Governmental proposal

Id	Name of Site	Size BG	Longitude	Latitude	H110	H115	H170	H1230	H2120	H3130	H3160	H3220	H4030	H6120*	H6210*	H6240*	H6510*	H7110*	H7220*	H8310	H9020	H9180*	H91E0	H91F0	H91H0*	H9410	S1029	S1061	S1084*	S1096	S1106	S1120	S1163	S1188	S1303	S1335	S1354*	S1355	S1361	S1477	S1528	S1902	S1903													
SK001	Tri peniažky	1,42	A	20°14'	48°37'																																																			
SK006	Rieka Latorica   River Latorica	73,64	P	21°51'	48°29'																																																			
SK014	Lázky	0,76	A	22°04'	49°11'																																																			
SK015	Dolná Bukovina   Lower Bukovina	2,93	A	18°57'	48°24'																																																			
SK016	Košariská	1,11	A	21°58'	49°14'																																																			
SK019	Tarbuska	1,71	P	21°47'	48°22'																																																			
SK020	Lesík Bisce   Woodlot Bisce	0,27	P	21°46'	48°41'																																																			
SK024	Hradná dolina   Castle valley	0,14	A	18°01'	48°37'																																																			
SK026	Raškovský luh   Raškovský mead	0,17	P	21°56'	48°34'																																																			
SK029	Vysoká	0,24	P	21°58'	48°25'																																																			
SK030	Horešské lúky   Horešské grasslands	0,77	P	21°57'	48°25'																																																			
SK032	Ladmovské vápence   Ladmovské limestones	3,32	P	21°46'	48°25'																																																			
SK034	Lesík pri Borši   Woodlot by Borš	0,08	P	21°43'	48°23'																																																			
SK036	Rieka Litava   River Litava	26,30	A	19°06'	48°13'																																																			
SK037	Oborínsky les   Oborinsky forest	0,10	P	21°55'	48°32'																																																			
SK038	Oborínske jamy   Oborínske pits	0,07	P	21°54'	48°32'																																																			
SK044	Badínsky prales   Badinsky primeval forest	1,54	A	19°03'	48°41'																																																			
SK048	Dukla	68,86	A	21°48'	49°22'																																																			
SK056	Habáňovo	0,03	A	19°40'	48°35'																																																			
SK057	Rašeliniská Oravskej kotliny   Peatlands of Oravská basin	8,40	A	19°46'	49°24'																																																			
SK059	Jelšie	0,28	A	19°34'	49°02'																																																			
SK060	Chraste	0,14	A	19°32'	49°02'																																																			
SK064	Bratislavské luhy   Bratislavské meads	6,81	P	17°04'	48°08'																																																			
SK065	Marcelovské piesky   Marcelovské sands	0,42	P	18°19'	47°47'																																																			
SK067	Čenkov	1,49	P	18°32'	47°47'																																																			
SK075	Klátovské rameno   Klátovské river arms	2,84	P	17°42'	48°01'																																																			
SK077	Dunajské trstiny   Dunajské reeds	1,76	P	17°51'	47°46'																																																			
SK082	Margitín háj   Margitín grove	0,22	P	17°37'	48°03'																																																			
SK084	Zátoň	0,87	P	18°12'	48°01'																																																			
SK085	Dolný háj   Lower grove	0,50	P	18°13'	48°10'																																																			
SK090	Dunajské luhy   Danube meads	45,50	P	17°28'	47°54'																																																			
SK092	Dolnovážske luhy   Dolnovážske meads	1,87	P	18°06'	47°48'																																																			
SK101	Klokočovské rašeliniská   Klokočovské peatlands	0,37	A	18°33'	49°29'																																																			
SK103	Čachtické Karpaty   Čachtické Carpathians	7,08	A	17°44'	48°42'																																																			
SK104	Homolské Karpaty   Homolské Carpathians	51,86	A	17°09'	48°17'																																																			
SK105	Travertíny pri Spišskom Podhradí   Travertines by Spišské Podhradie	2,28	A	20°46'	48°59'																																																			
SK112	Slovenský raj   Slovak Paradise	168,40	A	20°21'	48°54'																																																			
SK115	Bahno	0,41	P	17°16'	48°37'																																																			
SK117	Abrod	1,63	P	16°60'	48°32'																																																			
SK120	Jasenácke	0,52	P	17°09'	48°33'																																																			
SK121	Marhecké rybníky   Marhecké fishponds	0,91	P	17°02'	48°25'																																																			
SK124	Bogdaličský vrch   Bogdaličský hill	0,57	P	16°54'	48°25'																																																			
SK125	Gajarské atúvium Moravy   Gajarské alluvium of Morava	12,40	P	16°57'	48°32'																																																			
SK127	Temešská skala   Temešská rock	1,64	A	18°29'	48°53'																																																			
SK128	Rokoš	56,85	A	18°25'	48°46'																																																			
SK129	Cerovina	3,54	P	18°42'	48°03'																																																			

















## Complete shadow list of sites

Proposed by Slovak NGOs – addition to Governmental proposal  
(sites from previous table are shaded).

Id	Name of Site	Size	BG	Longitude	Latitude
SK500	Valaská Belá	19,59	A	18°26'	48°53'
SK501	Adidovce	21,52	A	22°01'	49°02'
SK502	Antol	0,24	A	18°57'	48°26'
SK503	Bacúch	1,13	A	19°47'	48°50'
SK504	Badín	7,49	A	19°06'	48°41'
SK505	Banská Štiavnica	7,49	A	18°53'	48°26'
SK506	Bažantnica	0,46	P	17°04'	48°21'
SK507	Beňatina	5,07	A	22°21'	48°49'
SK508	Betliar	0,23	A	20°34'	48°45'
SK509	Bíňa	0,16	P	18°40'	47°56'
SK510	Senné 2	6,42	P	22°05'	48°41'
SK511	Blhovce	1,53	P	19°58'	48°17'
SK512	Bobrovník	0,13	A	19°28'	49°07'
SK513	Bodíky	0,06	P	17°29'	47°55'
SK514	Boheľov	0,19	P	17°41'	47°54'
SK515	Borov	0,84	A	21°54'	49°18'
SK516	Bottovo	2,59	P	20°09'	48°19'
SK517	Brdárka	16,99	A	20°21'	48°46'
SK518	Bretejovce	2,63	A	21°16'	48°50'
SK519	Bretka	0,03	P	20°21'	48°30'
SK520	Breznička	4,02	P	19°44'	48°24'
SK521	Budatínska Lehota	2,00	A	18°49'	49°18'
SK522	Bukovec pri Košiciach	0,25	A	21°10'	48°42'
SK523	Busov	38,30	A	21°14'	49°24'
SK524	Buzica	1,93	P	21°07'	48°31'
SK525	Bystričany	1,31	A	18°30'	48°41'
SK526	Bzenica	0,47	A	18°45'	48°31'
SK527	Cejkov	1,16	P	21°46'	48°27'
SK528	Cerová-Lieskové	0,31	A	17°24'	48°35'
SK529	Cinobaňa	10,86	A	19°39'	48°29'
SK530	Čabalovce	11,73	A	21°58'	49°12'
SK531	Čadca	0,21	A	18°51'	49°28'
SK532	Čápor	0,27	P	18°02'	48°16'
SK533	Čelovce	6,46	A	19°06'	48°09'
SK534	Čertizné	1,02	A	21°49'	49°21'
SK535	Červený Kameň	0,09	A	18°10'	49°05'
SK536	Čierne	0,04	A	18°48'	49°30'
SK537	Čierny Balog	5,04	A	19°45'	48°40'
SK538	Čifáre	0,27	P	18°25'	48°16'
SK539	Čoltovo	0,33	P	20°23'	48°30'
SK540	Čremošné	0,22	A	18°54'	48°50'
SK541	Čunovo	2,25	P	17°13'	48°02'
SK542	Davidov	0,24	A	21°36'	48°50'
SK543	Povodie stredného toku Bodvy   River basin of the middle part of Bodva	1,85	A	21°00'	48°39'
SK544	Dedinky	0,15	A	20°24'	48°52'
SK545	Detva	2,82	A	19°25'	48°36'
SK546	Devín	0,14	P	16°60'	48°10'
SK547	Devínska Nová Ves	0,12	P	17°00'	48°12'
SK548	Dlhá Ves	1,51	P	20°27'	48°30'
SK549	Dlhé Stráže	0,48	A	20°31'	49°02'
SK550	Dobšiná	28,05	A	20°19'	48°49'
SK551	Dolná Mičiná	0,06	A	19°13'	48°41'
SK552	Dolná Rimava	2,54	P	20°10'	48°18'
SK553	Dolná Tižina	0,23	A	18°55'	49°13'
SK554	Dolná Ždaňa	0,22	A	18°46'	48°32'
SK555	Dolné Hámre	0,54	A	18°46'	48°28'
SK556	Dolné Jabľoňovce	0,61	A	18°49'	48°19'
SK557	Dolné Strháre	0,87	A	19°24'	48°16'
SK558	Dolný Vadičov	1,24	A	18°51'	49°17'
SK559	Dolný Vinodol	0,15	P	18°14'	48°11'

Id	Name of Site	Size	BG	Longitude	Latitude
SK560	Domaníky	0,31	P	18°59'	48°16'
SK561	Donovaly	0,78	A	19°13'	48°53'
SK562	Dovalovo	1,36	A	19°49'	49°04'
SK563	Drahňov	0,23	P	21°59'	48°35'
SK564	Driečna	0,01	A	21°48'	49°19'
SK565	Drienčany	0,71	A	20°05'	48°29'
SK566	Drienov	0,22	A	21°18'	48°52'
SK567	Slovenský kras – východ   Slovak karst – east	26,57	A	20°54'	48°39'
SK568	Dubová pri Svidníku	2,37	A	21°28'	49°21'
SK569	Dúbravy	1,16	A	19°24'	48°36'
SK570	Dulova Ves	1,40	A	21°20'	48°56'
SK571	Dvorníky	0,14	P	17°46'	48°22'
SK572	Filice	0,30	A	20°19'	49°01'
SK573	Gbefany	10,97	A	18°51'	49°14'
SK574	Gbelce	1,43	P	18°29'	47°51'
SK575	Gbely	0,21	P	17°05'	48°42'
SK576	Gemerská Hôrka	0,46	P	20°23'	48°32'
SK577	Turecká v Rožňavskej kotline   Turecká in Rožňavská basin	20,99	A	20°27'	48°41'
SK578	Gemerské Dechtáre	0,05	P	20°02'	48°13'
SK579	Gočovo	5,08	A	20°27'	48°45'
SK580	Hačava	0,53	A	20°51'	48°40'
SK581	Haniska Haniská	1,00	P	21°14'	48°38'
SK582	Staré hory západ – Kremnické vrchy   Staré hory west – Kremnické mountains	131,54	A	19°03'	48°46'
SK583	Harvelka	0,21	A	19°08'	49°21'
SK584	Hažín nad Cirochou	1,11	A	21°57'	48°55'
SK585	Helcmanovce	8,71	A	20°52'	48°51'
SK586	Hervartov	5,70	A	21°09'	49°14'
SK587	Hiadef	0,05	A	19°19'	48°49'
SK588	Hnilčík	1,69	A	20°33'	48°51'
SK589	Hnilec	11,85	A	20°53'	48°50'
SK590	Hontianske Tesáre	0,03	P	18°57'	48°13'
SK591	Horná Mariková	12,75	A	18°19'	49°18'
SK592	Horná Ondava	2,56	A	21°38'	49°13'
SK593	Horná Súča	2,47	A	17°58'	49°00'
SK594	Horná Topľa	3,90	A	21°27'	49°12'
SK595	Horná Trnávka	0,27	A	18°46'	48°35'
SK596	Horná Ždaňa	1,29	A	18°44'	48°35'
SK597	Hornád	7,82	A	20°57'	48°55'
SK598	Horné Hámre	3,72	A	18°40'	48°31'
SK599	Horné Jabľoňovce	0,15	A	18°48'	48°21'
SK600	Horné Kočkovce	2,90	A	18°22'	49°07'
SK602	Horné Mýto	0,02	P	17°43'	48°01'
SK603	Horné poiplie	6,15	P	19°31'	48°11'
SK604	Horné Saliby	0,01	P	17°42'	48°07'
SK605	Horné Srnie	2,71	A	18°03'	49°01'
SK606	Horné Strháre	2,61	A	19°24'	48°16'
SK607	Horné Topoľníky	10,80	P	17°51'	47°58'
SK608	Horný Vadičov	9,15	A	18°54'	49°16'
SK609	Horša	3,52	P	18°42'	48°14'
SK610	Tríbeč – Hostovce	5,08	A	18°20'	48°27'
SK611	Hôrka pri Poprade	0,02	A	20°24'	49°01'
SK612	Hrabičov	10,20	A	18°42'	48°33'
SK613	Hrabušice	0,50	A	20°25'	48°59'
SK614	Hrboltová	4,37	A	19°16'	49°07'
SK615	Hriňová	10,45	A	19°28'	48°36'
SK616	Hrochoť	5,32	A	19°26'	48°40'
SK617	Hron	3,03	A	19°18'	48°47'
SK618	Hronec	1,31	A	19°34'	48°48'
SK619	Hronský Beňadik	0,25	A	18°34'	48°21'
SK620	Hrušovo	0,64	A	20°03'	48°31'
SK621	Hubová	1,22	A	19°12'	49°07'
SK622	Humenné	1,20	A	21°54'	48°58'

Annexes – Lists of sites per country – Slovakia

Id	Name of Site	Size	BG	Longitude	Latitude
SK623	Hybe	8,53	A	19°51'	49°04'
SK624	Chocholná-Velčice	21,55	A	17°53'	48°53'
SK625	Chrámec	1,85	P	20°10'	48°16'
SK626	Chvojnica	61,14	A	17°24'	48°47'
SK627	Muránska planina – Chyžné   Muránska plain – Chyžné	20,86	A	20°12'	48°42'
SK628	Ihráč	0,62	A	18°58'	48°39'
SK629	Iliašovce	0,78	A	20°31'	48°59'
SK630	Imeľ	0,01	P	18°07'	47°53'
SK631	Ipeľské Predmostie	0,43	P	19°01'	48°05'
SK632	Ipeľské Úľany	1,64	P	19°03'	48°09'
SK633	Ipeľský Potok	3,08	A	19°43'	48°34'
SK634	Janova Lehota	0,30	A	18°46'	48°39'
SK635	Janova Ves	0,86	A	18°19'	48°33'
SK636	Jarabina	1,10	A	20°41'	49°21'
SK637	Jarovce	0,72	P	17°06'	48°05'
SK638	Jasenové	0,66	A	18°37'	49°07'
SK639	Jastrabá	0,43	A	18°57'	48°39'
SK640	Jedľové Kostolány	9,40	A	18°31'	48°29'
SK641	Jelenec	0,11	A	18°11'	48°24'
SK642	Jesenské	0,29	P	20°03'	48°17'
SK643	Jestice	1,44	P	20°04'	48°13'
SK644	Spišská Magura – Jezersko	70,52	A	20°21'	49°17'
SK645	Považský Inovec sever   Považský Inovec north	64,15	A	17°60'	48°45'
SK646	Kamenica	0,18	A	20°58'	49°12'
SK647	Kamenica nad Cirochou	1,43	A	22°01'	48°55'
SK648	Kameničná	1,29	P	18°03'	47°50'
SK650	Kamienka	1,02	A	20°34'	49°21'
SK651	Kavečany	2,16	A	21°12'	48°46'
SK652	Kecerovské Pekľany	1,10	A	21°24'	48°50'
SK653	Kečovo	2,39	P	20°29'	48°30'
SK654	Kechnec	1,18	P	21°17'	48°33'
SK655	Kľak – lúky	0,87	A	18°38'	48°35'
SK656	Kláštór pod Znievom	3,45	A	18°44'	48°59'
SK657	Klátova Nová Ves	0,52	A	18°17'	48°32'
SK658	Klíčov	0,70	A	20°39'	49°01'
SK659	Klíž	0,27	A	18°24'	48°31'
SK660	Klížska Nemá	0,71	P	17°50'	47°45'
SK661	Klížske Hradište	1,05	A	18°24'	48°32'
SK662	Klokočov	1,18	A	18°36'	49°30'
SK663	Kľúčové	1,02	A	18°05'	48°57'
SK664	Kľúčovec	35,96	P	17°41'	47°47'
SK665	Kluknava	44,04	A	20°59'	48°56'
SK666	Kobylnice	12,11	A	21°32'	49°07'
SK667	Kokošovce	0,10	A	21°19'	48°57'
SK668	Kolačno	0,57	A	18°26'	48°34'
SK669	Kolíňany	1,99	P	18°11'	48°21'
SK670	Kolta	0,06	P	18°26'	48°02'
SK671	Komjatná	1,89	A	19°14'	49°09'
SK672	Koňuš	1,41	A	22°16'	48°47'
SK673	Kopanice	0,66	A	18°49'	48°26'
SK674	Kopčany	3,46	P	17°04'	48°45'
SK675	Korunková	4,66	A	21°47'	49°12'
SK676	Kostolná - Záriečie	0,28	A	17°59'	48°53'
SK677	Kostolná pri Dunaji	0,53	P	17°27'	48°10'
SK678	Krajné Čierno	3,88	A	21°41'	49°20'
SK679	Krásna Ves	0,14	A	18°14'	48°52'
SK680	Krásnohorská Dlhá Lúka	0,98	A	20°34'	48°37'
SK681	Krnišov	1,01	A	18°59'	48°22'
SK682	Krupina	6,58	A	19°03'	48°24'
SK683	Krušetnica	23,60	A	19°17'	49°24'
SK684	Kšinná	14,25	A	18°24'	48°50'
SK685	Kúty	3,52	P	17°03'	48°41'
SK686	Kysucké Nové Mesto	0,29	A	18°45'	49°18'
SK687	Lačnov	1,53	A	20°56'	49°05'

Id	Name of Site	Size	BG	Longitude	Latitude
SK688	Ladomirov	0,59	A	22°16'	48°55'
SK689	Ladzany	1,12	A	18°53'	48°17'
SK690	Lazy pod Makytou	0,53	A	18°14'	49°17'
SK691	Červený Kláštor	0,42	A	20°26'	49°23'
SK692	Lipovec v Gemeri	1,80	A	20°04'	48°32'
SK693	Liptovská Kokava	2,45	A	19°51'	49°06'
SK694	Liptovská Lúžna	8,82	A	19°20'	48°57'
SK695	Liptovská Osada	2,02	A	19°16'	48°56'
SK696	Liptovská Porúbka	1,46	A	19°44'	49°00'
SK697	Liptovská Štiavnica	3,05	A	19°20'	49°02'
SK698	Liptovská Teplička	7,15	A	20°04'	48°58'
SK699	Liptovské Revúce	3,13	A	19°10'	48°56'
SK700	Liptovský Ján	1,22	A	19°40'	49°03'
SK701	Lisková	1,37	A	19°20'	49°06'
SK702	Litava	6,00	P	19°02'	48°12'
SK703	Litmanová	1,69	A	20°36'	49°23'
SK704	Lodno	0,82	A	18°52'	49°20'
SK705	Lovča	1,01	A	18°49'	48°34'
SK706	Lovčica	2,91	A	18°44'	48°39'
SK707	Lubá	0,85	P	18°37'	47°51'
SK708	Lubietová	0,26	A	19°27'	48°42'
SK709	Holubyho kopanice okolie   Holubyho kopanice surrounding	78,17	A	17°41'	48°51'
SK710	Luboriečka	0,05	P	19°31'	48°15'
SK711	Lučenec	6,39	P	19°38'	48°19'
SK712	Lúka	0,05	A	17°54'	48°40'
SK713	Lukavica	3,48	A	21°18'	49°16'
SK714	Lupčianka	0,41	A	19°24'	49°02'
SK715	Lutila	0,97	A	18°50'	48°38'
SK716	Lysica	0,45	A	18°55'	49°15'
SK717	Malacky	0,13	P	17°02'	48°28'
SK718	Malcov	1,00	A	21°01'	49°20'
SK719	Malčice	0,61	P	21°49'	48°34'
SK720	Marcelová	0,21	P	18°18'	47°45'
SK721	Markuška	0,98	A	20°20'	48°43'
SK722	Martinček	1,09	A	19°20'	49°05'
SK723	Martovce	0,01	P	18°07'	47°52'
SK724	Matejovce nad Hornádom	0,98	A	20°41'	48°55'
SK725	Matiašovce	0,58	A	20°20'	49°21'
SK726	Matysová	0,32	A	20°44'	49°20'
SK727	Medovarce	1,88	P	18°58'	48°14'
SK728	Medzany	0,77	A	21°10'	49°03'
SK729	Medzev	0,09	A	20°54'	48°42'
SK730	Meliata	0,77	P	20°20'	48°30'
SK731	Michajlov	2,04	A	22°20'	48°54'
SK732	Miroľa	8,83	A	21°44'	49°20'
SK733	Mlynky	1,69	A	20°24'	48°51'
SK734	Moča	0,20	P	18°25'	47°47'
SK735	Močenok	0,11	P	17°54'	48°13'
SK736	Žakýlske lúky	3,80	A	18°57'	48°33'
SK737	Modrý Kameň	0,73	A	19°20'	48°15'
SK738	Mochovce	6,69	P	18°25'	48°16'
SK739	Mokradská Hoľa	4,89	A	19°17'	49°17'
SK740	Mošurov	7,44	A	21°14'	49°08'
SK741	Motyčky	0,34	A	19°11'	48°51'
SK742	Mužla	0,48	P	18°35'	47°48'
SK743	Myjav	3,98	A	17°26'	48°42'
SK744	Nechvállova Polianka	0,75	A	22°06'	49°04'
SK745	Nemečky	0,09	A	18°06'	48°41'
SK746	Nemešany	0,19	A	20°41'	49°01'
SK747	Neslušá	4,36	A	18°44'	49°19'
SK748	Nesvady	0,12	P	18°09'	47°56'
SK749	Nitrianske Rudno – sever   Nitrianske Rudno – north	36,88	A	18°29'	48°51'
SK750	Nivky	1,91	P	17°03'	48°32'
SK751	Nížný Orlík	0,26	A	21°32'	49°20'

Id	Name of Site	Size	BG	Longitude	Latitude
SK752	Pohronský Inovec	102,41	A	18°36'	48°27'
SK753	Nová Sedlica	3,09	A	22°31'	49°03'
SK754	Nový Tekov	4,19	P	18°28'	48°16'
SK755	Obora	3,76	P	17°08'	48°29'
SK756	Obyce	4,49	A	18°27'	48°28'
SK757	Očová	1,93	A	19°25'	48°38'
SK758	Oľšavka pri Gribove	1,16	A	21°41'	49°18'
SK759	Ondrochov	0,21	P	18°11'	48°07'
SK760	Opatovská Nová Ves	0,37	P	19°17'	48°08'
SK761	Oravce	1,27	A	19°16'	48°42'
SK762	Oravská Jasenica	4,98	A	19°24'	49°27'
SK763	Oravská Lesná	34,13	A	19°17'	49°22'
SK764	Oravská Polhora	2,35	A	19°25'	49°33'
SK765	Oravské Veselé	0,52	A	19°23'	49°30'
SK766	Osrblie	2,50	A	19°32'	48°44'
SK767	Ostrá Lúka	6,30	A	19°05'	48°33'
SK768	Osturňa	6,74	A	20°16'	49°21'
SK769	Oščadnica	0,48	A	18°56'	49°25'
SK770	Ožďany	0,28	P	19°51'	48°24'
SK771	Panické Dravce	0,77	P	19°38'	48°18'
SK772	Paňovce	3,39	P	21°03'	48°40'
SK773	Papin	0,16	A	22°04'	49°07'
SK774	Patince	0,19	P	18°16'	47°44'
SK775	Pavlovce nad Uhom	0,83	P	22°07'	48°37'
SK776	Pečenice	2,89	A	18°47'	48°18'
SK777	Petrová	4,18	A	21°06'	49°26'
SK778	Petrovany	2,58	A	21°18'	48°54'
SK779	Petrovce	0,54	P	20°03'	48°13'
SK780	Pila pri Žarnovici	9,54	A	18°36'	48°33'
SK781	Pilhov	2,62	A	20°41'	49°24'
SK782	Pinciná	1,12	P	19°47'	48°21'
SK783	Pitelová	7,02	A	18°56'	48°37'
SK784	Plášťovce	3,30	P	18°58'	48°10'
SK785	Plavecký Peter	0,01	A	17°18'	48°33'
SK786	Plešivec	21,32	A	20°26'	48°36'
SK787	Ploské nad Torysou	3,97	A	21°21'	48°47'
SK788	Podhradie	0,57	A	18°02'	48°39'
SK789	Podhradie pri Novákoch	11,10	A	18°40'	48°41'
SK790	Podkonice	0,39	A	19°15'	48°49'
SK791	Podolíneec	0,48	A	20°32'	49°17'
SK792	Polomka	1,31	A	19°50'	48°52'
SK793	Poluvsie nad Rajčankou	4,52	A	18°42'	49°09'
SK794	Pondelok	0,45	A	19°51'	48°27'
SK795	Poniky	1,67	A	19°23'	48°41'
SK796	Rieka Poprad 2   River Poprad 2	2,06	A	20°21'	49°06'
SK797	Poša	1,52	A	21°48'	48°50'
SK798	Povina	2,30	A	18°51'	49°18'
SK799	Priebeh	0,69	A	19°13'	48°47'
SK800	Priekopa	0,36	A	22°17'	48°45'
SK801	Prievaly	0,06	A	17°18'	48°33'
SK802	Prochot	1,57	A	18°43'	48°36'
SK803	Rabča	0,17	A	19°28'	49°29'
SK804	Rabčice	1,00	A	19°31'	49°32'
SK805	Radofa	1,58	A	18°48'	49°17'
SK806	Radvaň nad Dunajom	0,20	P	18°20'	47°46'
SK807	Rákoš	0,95	A	21°26'	48°39'
SK808	Raková	0,11	A	18°45'	49°26'
SK809	Rakovce nad Ondavou	1,09	A	21°49'	48°46'
SK810	Rakovnica	2,17	A	20°27'	48°39'
SK811	Regetovka	0,04	A	21°17'	49°25'
SK812	Rešica	1,63	P	21°02'	48°32'
SK813	Revištské Podzámčie	1,73	A	18°43'	48°31'
SK814	Riadok	15,62	P	17°07'	48°26'
SK815	Roškovce	0,28	A	21°51'	49°14'
SK816	Rovné nad Udavou	0,28	A	21°60'	48°59'

Id	Name of Site	Size	BG	Longitude	Latitude
SK817	Rožňava	1,68	A	20°34'	48°45'
SK818	Rudňany	2,13	A	20°42'	48°52'
SK819	Ruská Nová Ves	0,02	A	21°21'	48°59'
SK820	Ruská Vofa	1,73	A	21°35'	49°06'
SK821	Ruský Hrabovec	1,54	A	22°21'	48°51'
SK822	Ružiná	7,27	A	19°32'	48°25'
SK823	Ružomberok	13,29	A	19°17'	49°02'
SK824	Rybník nad Turcom	0,13	A	20°07'	48°32'
SK825	Salka I	2,39	P	18°42'	47°53'
SK826	Sása	0,77	A	19°07'	48°26'
SK827	Sebechleby	0,41	A	18°56'	48°18'
SK828	Selce	2,96	A	19°11'	48°47'
SK829	Sielnica	0,68	A	19°03'	48°40'
SK830	Sihelné	0,07	A	19°24'	49°32'
SK831	Sihla	0,50	A	19°38'	48°41'
SK832	Silica	3,03	P	20°32'	48°34'
SK833	Silická Brezová	3,49	P	20°30'	48°32'
SK834	Sitnianska Lehôtka	1,25	A	18°58'	48°19'
SK835	Skala	0,96	A	18°04'	48°55'
SK836	Skalité	8,31	A	18°56'	49°31'
SK837	Skároš	0,84	A	21°25'	48°37'
SK838	Sklené	0,32	A	18°48'	48°49'
SK839	Tríbeč – východ   Tríbeč – east	28,29	A	18°30'	48°33'
SK840	Slaná – dolný tok   Slaná – lower stream	2,61	P	20°19'	48°25'
SK841	Slánske vrchy   Slánske mountains	220,26	A	21°29'	48°50'
SK842	Gombasek	1,39	A	20°28'	48°34'
SK843	Slavkovce	0,14	P	21°55'	48°37'
SK844	Slovenská Ľupča	1,01	A	19°16'	48°46'
SK845	Smolenická Nová Ves	1,86	A	17°26'	48°29'
SK846	Snežnica	15,79	A	18°48'	49°16'
SK847	Snina	0,31	A	22°11'	49°01'
SK848	Sokoľany	0,06	P	21°14'	48°36'
SK849	Spišská Belá	0,05	A	20°28'	49°12'
SK850	Spišská Nová Ves	2,43	A	20°33'	48°55'
SK851	Spišská Stará Ves	1,07	A	20°21'	49°23'
SK852	Spišské Vlachy	1,00	A	20°47'	48°58'
SK853	Stakčín	4,83	A	22°13'	48°57'
SK854	Stakčinská Roztoka	1,08	A	22°17'	49°00'
SK855	Stankovany	19,54	A	19°11'	49°10'
SK856	Stará Bystrica	0,05	A	18°57'	49°21'
SK857	Lúčanská Malá Fatra	133,02	A	18°45'	49°02'
SK858	Stratená	0,95	A	20°21'	48°51'
SK859	Stráže pod Tatrami	0,20	A	20°20'	49°03'
SK860	Strečno	0,19	A	18°54'	49°10'
SK861	Stredné Plachtince	3,73	A	19°17'	48°16'
SK862	Strelníky	9,62	A	19°25'	48°42'
SK863	Stretava	0,39	P	21°58'	48°38'
SK864	Stretavka	0,31	P	21°60'	48°37'
SK865	Strihovce	0,16	A	22°16'	48°54'
SK866	Stupava	0,19	A	17°03'	48°16'
SK867	Súdovce	9,52	P	18°50'	48°15'
SK868	Suchá nad Parnou	1,42	P	17°27'	48°24'
SK869	Súľov-Hradná	0,18	A	18°35'	49°07'
SK870	Svidník	0,49	A	21°35'	49°19'
SK871	Šarišské Čierne	4,78	A	21°22'	49°20'
SK872	Šaštín	0,08	P	17°07'	48°36'
SK873	Šávoľ	0,22	P	19°50'	48°19'
SK874	Šiba	3,43	A	21°12'	49°13'
SK875	Šišov	0,09	A	18°10'	48°40'
SK876	Štiavnik	0,02	A	18°25'	49°19'
SK877	Štrba	1,59	A	20°03'	49°02'
SK878	Šumiac	2,84	A	20°06'	48°50'
SK879	Švábovce	3,49	A	20°21'	49°01'
SK880	Tekovská Breznica	0,29	A	18°38'	48°23'

Annexes – Lists of sites per country – Slovakia

Id	Name of Site	Size	BG	Longitude	Latitude
SK881	Telgárt	7,54	A	20°13'	48°51'
SK882	Teplá	13,22	A	18°55'	48°29'
SK883	Terchová	24,83	A	19°04'	49°17'
SK884	Tešmák	0,24	P	18°60'	48°06'
SK885	Tomášikovo	0,04	P	17°40'	48°05'
SK886	Tomášová	2,73	P	19°60'	48°22'
SK887	Tomášovce	0,39	A	19°38'	48°23'
SK888	Topoľa	2,30	A	22°21'	49°03'
SK889	Tône	0,13	P	17°44'	47°54'
SK890	Trenčianska Závada	9,37	A	18°03'	48°60'
SK891	Trnavá Hora	16,53	A	19°01'	48°36'
SK892	Krivoštianka – juh   Krivoštianska – south	10,96	A	21°56'	48°51'
SK893	Trnové	1,00	A	18°49'	49°11'
SK894	Trstená	0,34	A	19°36'	49°27'
SK895	Meandre dolného toku Hornádu   Meanders of the lower stream of Hornád	4,26	P	21°19'	48°34'
SK896	Tuhár	7,16	A	19°28'	48°26'
SK897	Turany	9,23	A	19°02'	49°08'
SK898	Turčianky	0,73	A	18°20'	48°35'
SK899	Turecká vo Veľkej Fatre	0,40	A	19°06'	48°52'
SK900	Turie	0,72	A	18°45'	49°07'
SK901	Turňa nad Bodvou	0,29	A	20°52'	48°36'
SK902	Udiča	1,49	A	18°22'	49°09'
SK903	Valaská Dubová	1,11	A	19°18'	49°08'
SK904	Valkov	0,22	A	21°39'	49°04'
SK905	Važec	6,69	A	19°57'	49°05'
SK906	Včelince	0,06	P	20°19'	48°23'
SK907	Tríbeč – Veľčice	3,17	A	18°16'	48°26'
SK908	Veličná	14,98	A	19°14'	49°17'
SK909	Veľká Lesná	8,30	A	20°26'	49°20'
SK910	Veľká Maňa	0,97	P	18°18'	48°10'
SK911	Veľké Hoste	0,31	A	18°09'	48°40'
SK912	Veľké Lovce	1,44	P	18°23'	48°04'
SK913	Veľké Orvište	0,13	A	17°47'	48°38'
SK914	Šoltysa	4,92	A	20°29'	49°21'
SK915	Veľký Pesek	0,47	P	18°42'	48°04'
SK916	Veľký Šariš	0,81	A	21°11'	49°03'
SK917	Vernár	0,68	A	20°14'	48°55'
SK918	Víglaš	0,57	A	19°23'	48°33'
SK919	Višňové pri Strečne	2,32	A	18°48'	49°10'
SK920	Vojňany	1,91	A	20°27'	49°15'
SK921	Vyhne	2,26	A	18°48'	48°31'
SK922	Laborec – Výrava	3,62	A	21°56'	49°07'
SK923	Vyšná Šebastová	0,04	A	21°21'	49°01'
SK924	Vyšné Repaše	3,86	A	20°40'	49°03'
SK925	Vyšné Slovinky	37,06	A	20°46'	48°51'
SK926	Vyšný Blh	0,62	A	20°08'	48°28'
SK927	Vyšný Slavkov	7,11	A	20°54'	49°04'
SK928	Záhorce	0,04	P	19°19'	48°07'
SK929	Závada pri Chrtanoch	1,62	A	19°29'	48°18'
SK930	Závada pri Levoči	1,77	A	20°39'	49°04'
SK931	Závadka nad Hronom	2,46	A	19°57'	48°49'
SK932	Závadka pri Nálepkove	4,77	A	20°37'	48°52'
SK933	Zbehňov	0,70	P	21°36'	48°42'
SK934	Zbojné	1,20	A	22°01'	49°08'
SK935	Zbora	7,44	A	18°18'	49°12'
SK936	Zbyňov	1,89	A	18°39'	49°08'
SK937	Zlatno	34,42	A	18°17'	48°31'
SK938	Zobor	0,21	A	18°05'	48°20'
SK939	Zvolen – Stráže	1,71	A	19°06'	48°34'
SK940	Zvolenská kotlina sever	15,12	A	19°11'	48°43'
SK941	Žalobín	10,92	A	21°46'	48°58'
SK942	Žarnovické stráne	11,16	A	18°41'	48°28'
SK943	Železná Breznica	1,88	A	19°01'	48°39'

Id	Name of Site	Size	BG	Longitude	Latitude
SK944	Žiar nad Hronom	1,21	A	18°52'	48°36'
SK945	Povodie Herlianskeho a Rankovské	12,45	A	21°27'	48°47'
SK946	Župkov	0,75	A	18°39'	48°31'
SK947	Strážovské Vrchy západ   Strážovské mountains west	146,66	A	18°14'	48°55'
SK948	Malé Karpaty	109,82	A	17°15'	48°23'
SK949	Hrabovec nad Laborcom	46,22	A	21°54'	49°05'
SK950	Západné Beskydy	12,33	A	21°23'	49°26'
SK951	Danova 2	15,33	A	22°02'	49°17'
SK952	Dvorníky nad Nitricou	16,01	A	18°28'	48°41'
SK953	Váh Turčianskej kotliny   Váh of Turčianska basin	3,64	A	18°53'	49°09'
SK954	Handlová	32,53	A	18°44'	48°48'
SK955	Javorie – sever   Javorie – north	31,07	A	19°09'	48°32'
SK956	Pieniny 2	10,71	A	20°30'	49°23'
SK957	Topľa – Lukov	0,38	A	21°06'	49°16'
SK958	Čergov – Krivá hora	10,87	A	21°06'	49°18'
SK959	Pod Jaminou	0,17	A	20°38'	48°45'
SK960	Úhorná	1,04	A	20°39'	48°44'
SK961	Dolný vrch 2	1,48	P	20°42'	48°35'
SK962	Slovenský Kras 2	34,25	A	20°42'	48°38'
SK963	Látky	4,83	A	19°39'	48°33'
SK964	Podtatranské lúky   Podtatranské grasslands	18,41	A	19°43'	49°08'
SK965	Hagánsky potok   Hagánsky brook	1,05	A	20°10'	49°04'
SK966	Spišská Teplica	4,18	A	20°11'	49°03'
SK967	Bystrá	2,47	A	20°10'	48°58'
SK968	Kravany	2,79	A	20°12'	49°00'
SK969	Silická Jablonica	7,07	P	20°36'	48°34'
SK970	Štós a Smolník	16,93	A	20°45'	48°42'
SK971	Kojšovská hoľa	179,21	A	20°55'	48°46'
SK972	Starovodské jedliny 2	5,48	A	20°39'	48°46'
SK973	Henclová	1,27	A	20°36'	48°46'
SK974	Levočské Vrchy východ   Levočské mountains east	26,06	A	20°47'	49°08'
SK975	Dukla 2	4,78	A	21°43'	49°24'



Slovenia

Id	Name of Site	Size	BC	Longitude	Latitude	H1110	H1150	H1170	H1230	H2120	H3130	H3160	H3220	H4030	H6120*	H6210*	H6240*	H6510*	H7110*	H7140	H7220*	H8310	H9020	H9180*	H91E0	H91F0	H91H0*	H9410	S1029	S1061	S1084*	S1096	S1106	S1120	S1163	S1188	S1303	S1335	S1354*	S1355	S1361	S1477	S1528	S1902	S1903									
SI001	The Soca river (the spring – Most na Soci)   Soca	12,00	A	13°30'	46°18'																																																	
SI002	the Tolminka River   Tolminka	3,00	A	13°44'	46°12'																																																	
SI003	Idrija river   Idrija river	4,80	A	14°00'	45°58'																																																	
SI004	The Trebuša river   Trebula	2,60	A	13°50'	46°04'																																																	
SI005	Rasa river   Rasa	3,50	C	13°52'	45°48'																																																	
SI011	The Bloke plateau   Bloke	4,30	A	14°29'	45°48'																																																	
SI014	Iška and Zala rivers   Iska, Zala	5,00	A	14°30'	45°54'																																																	
SI015	Kolpa river   Kolpa	40,00	A	14°56'	45°32'																																																	
SI016	The Krka river (the spring – Soteska)   Krka	30,00	C	15°03'	45°46'																																																	
SI017	The Mura river   Mura	150,00	C	16°09'	46°36'																																																	
SI018	The Bohinj lake   Bohinjsko jezero	4,50	A	13°52'	46°17'																																																	
SI020	The Sava river   Sava	>58,65	A	14°08'	46°23'																																																	
SI021	Kokra river   Kokra	4,50	A	14°30'	46°18'																																																	
SI022	The Radensko karst polje   Radensko polje	8,00	C	14°41'	45°55'																																																	
SI023	The savinja river   Savinja	8,00	A	14°47'	46°22'																																																	
SI024	Reka river   Reka (Velika voda)	1,50	C	14°18'	45°32'																																																	
SI027	The Lahinja river   Lahinja	1,80	C	15°15'	45°36'																																																	
SI029	The Jovsi wet meadow   Jovsi	1,50	C	15°41'	45°55'																																																	
SI030	The Mlake site   Mlake	2,70	C	14°38'	46°10'																																																	
SI031	The Ljubljansko barje marsh   Ljubljansko barje	163,00	A	14°22'	45°58'																																																	
SI032	The Mlake moor   Mlake pri Vipavi	2,60	C	13°57'	45°51'																																																	
SI034	Triglav national Park   Triglavski narodni park	840,00	A	13°51'	46°23'																																																	
SI035	The Kamniško-Savinjske Alpe and Karavanke   Kamniško-Savinjske Alpe in Karavanke	750,00	A	14°33'	46°21'																																																	
SI037	Olseva, Raduha, Peca   Olseva, Raduha, Peca	14,00	A	14°42'	46°27'																																																	
SI038	Pohorje   Pohorje	458,00	A	15°12'	46°30'																																																	
SI040	The region of Suha krajina   Suha krajina	8,70	C	14°52'	45°48'																																																	
SI041	The region of Kozjansko   Kozjansko	475,00	C	15°33'	46°05'																																																	
SI042	the region of Kras   Kras	673,00	C	13°51'	45°45'																																																	
SI043	Golte   Golte	14,00	A	14°54'	46°22'																																																	
SI054	Ucja   Ucja	0,25	A	13°28'	46°18'																																																	
SI057	The Rinža river   Rinža	2,20	A	14°51'	45°39'																																																	
SI061	The forest of Krakovski gozd   Krakovski gozd	2,70	C	15°24'	45°54'																																																	
SI063	Koritnica   Koritnica	6,00	A	13°39'	46°25'																																																	
SI064	Nadiza   Nadiza	3,00	A	13°29'	46°15'																																																	
SI066	The Kocevsko regio   Kocevsko	1048,00	A	14°56'	45°36'																																																	
SI067	Radovna   Radovna	5,00	A	14°06'	46°24'																																																	
SI068	Sori (Selska Sora and Poljanska Sora)   Sori (Selska Sora and Pooljanska Sora)	2,70	C	14°21'	46°09'																																																	
SI069	Sotla valley, Sotla river   Sotla	2,60	C	15°43'	45°57'																																																	



## Annex III: Links and information sources

### General Links

**European Commission – Natura 2000:**  
[europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/themes.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/themes.htm)  
[europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/natura.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/natura.htm)

**European Topic Centre on Nature Protection and Biodiversity:**  
[nature.eionet.eu.int/](http://nature.eionet.eu.int/)

**European Environment Agency:**  
[www.eea.eu.int](http://www.eea.eu.int)

**European Community Biodiversity clearing house – portal to information relevant to the Convention on Biodiversity:**  
[biodiversity-chm.eea.eu.int](http://biodiversity-chm.eea.eu.int)

### NGOs

**WWF Accession Initiative:**  
[www.panda.org/accession](http://www.panda.org/accession)

**European Centre for Nature Conservation – “Establishing Natura 2000 in EU Accession Countries”**  
[www.ecnc.nl/doc/ecnc/publicat/natu2000.html](http://www.ecnc.nl/doc/ecnc/publicat/natu2000.html)

**The Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB):**  
[www.ceeweb.org/](http://www.ceeweb.org/)

**BirdLife International:**  
[www.birdlife.org](http://www.birdlife.org)

**European Environmental Bureau (EEB):**  
[www.eeb.org](http://www.eeb.org)

**The World Conservation Union IUCN:**  
[www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

### Environment in the accession countries

**Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe (LCIE):**  
[large-carnivores-lcie.org/](http://large-carnivores-lcie.org/)

**Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative:**  
[www.carpathians.org](http://www.carpathians.org)

**Baltic States’ Regional Preparation for Natura 2000 (BANAT):**  
[www.bef.lv/nature/index.htm](http://www.bef.lv/nature/index.htm)

**Baltic Sea region:**  
[www.helcom.fi/environment.html](http://www.helcom.fi/environment.html)

**Baltic Sea Environment Home Page:**  
[www.envir.ee/baltics/](http://www.envir.ee/baltics/)

**Danube Environmental Forum:**  
[www.de-forum.org/](http://www.de-forum.org/)

**Danube River:**  
[archive.panda.org/livingwaters/danube/index.cfm](http://archive.panda.org/livingwaters/danube/index.cfm)

## Accession Countries

### Bulgaria

**Ministry of Environment and Water:**  
[www.moew.government.bg](http://www.moew.government.bg)

**The Ministry's Biodiversity Portal:**  
<http://chm.moew.government.bg>

**National Forestry Board at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests:**  
[www.nug.bg](http://www.nug.bg)

**BlueLink – Portal of the Bulgarian Environmental NGO's:**  
[www.bluelink.net](http://www.bluelink.net)

**Portal of the National and Nature Parks in Bulgaria:**  
[www.bg-parks.net](http://www.bg-parks.net)

### Cyprus

**Cyprus Governmental website:**  
[www.cyprus.gov.cy](http://www.cyprus.gov.cy)

### Czech Republic

**Natura 2000 website:**  
[www.natura2000.cz](http://www.natura2000.cz)

**Ministry of the Environment:**  
[www.env.cz/](http://www.env.cz/)

**Czech Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection:**  
[www.nature.cz/](http://www.nature.cz/)

### Estonia

**Estonian Ministry of the Environment:**  
[www.envir.ee](http://www.envir.ee)

**Estonian Environment Information Centre:**  
[www.envir.ee/itk](http://www.envir.ee/itk)

**Estonian Fund for Nature:**  
[www.elfond.ee](http://www.elfond.ee)

### Hungary

**Ministry of Environment and Water:**  
[www.ktm.hu/index\\_uk.htm](http://www.ktm.hu/index_uk.htm)

**Hungarian National Parks:**  
[www.madartavlat.hu/sajle.htm](http://www.madartavlat.hu/sajle.htm)

**WWF Hungary:**  
[www.wwf.hu](http://www.wwf.hu)

### Latvia

**Latvian Environment Agency:**  
[www.lva.gov.lv/eng/](http://www.lva.gov.lv/eng/)

**WWF Latvia:**  
[www.wwf.lv](http://www.wwf.lv)

### Lithuania

**Natura 2000:**  
[www.natura2000.lt](http://www.natura2000.lt)

**Lithuanian Ministry of Environment:**  
[www.am.lt](http://www.am.lt)

**Lithuanian Fund for Nature:**  
[www.glis.lt](http://www.glis.lt)

**Lithuanian Ornithological Society:**  
[www.birdlife.lt](http://www.birdlife.lt)

### Malta

**Nature Trust (Malta):**  
[www.naturetrustmalta.org](http://www.naturetrustmalta.org)

**The Malta Ecological Foundation:**  
[www.ecomalta.org](http://www.ecomalta.org)

**Malta Environment and Planning Authority:**  
[www.mepa.org.mt](http://www.mepa.org.mt)

## Poland

### Ministry of the Environment:

[www.mos.gov.pl/](http://www.mos.gov.pl/)

### WWF Poland:

[www.wwf.pl](http://www.wwf.pl)

## Romania

### Ministry of Waters and Environment Protection:

[www.mappm.ro/](http://www.mappm.ro/)

## Slovakia

### Slovak Ministry of Environment (in Slovak):

[www.lifeenv.gov.sk/minis/](http://www.lifeenv.gov.sk/minis/)

### Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology:

[www.daphne.sk](http://www.daphne.sk)

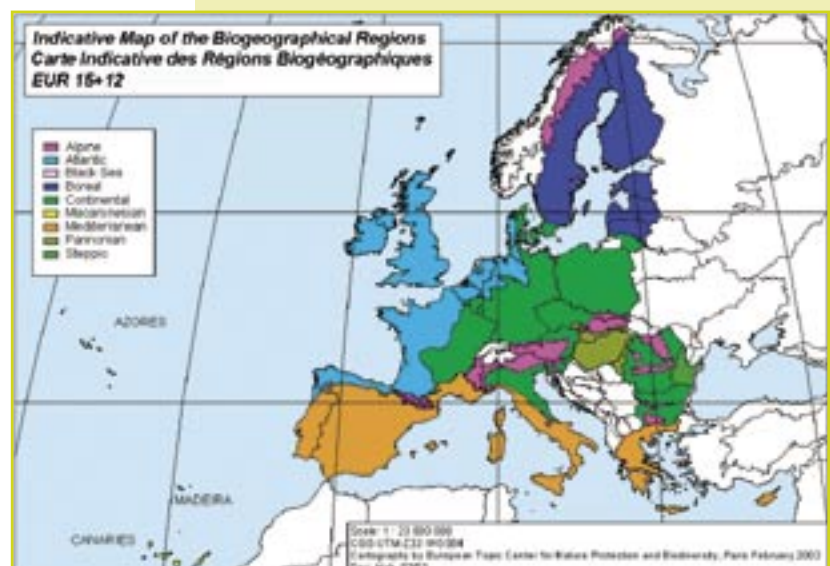
## Slovenia

### Ministry of the Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy:

[www.sigov.si/mop/en/index.htm](http://www.sigov.si/mop/en/index.htm)

### Birdlife Slovenia/DOPPS

[www.birdlife.net/worldwide/national/slovenia](http://www.birdlife.net/worldwide/national/slovenia)



[www.panda.org/accession](http://www.panda.org/accession)



WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which human live in harmony with nature, by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption

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