"Financing Natura 2000
Guidance and Workshops"

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As the designation of Natura 2000 sites is nearing completion and management plans for selected sites are in preparation, it has been recognized that there is lack of clarity regarding how these sites are to be financed. In July 2004 the Commission issued a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament on Financing Natura 2000 presenting its aim to co-finance Natura 2000 using the existing funding Instruments Preparations for the new EU financial period 2007-2013 which are to be completed by the end of 2006.

The financial needs of the Natura 2000 network relate to a broad range of measures required to ensure the efficient conservation management of the designated sites.

The Commission wishes to advise and support Member States in using the options of Community co-financing for Natura 2000 in the period 2007-2013. This will be achieved by:

- Publishing guidance handbook in 20 EU languages on how the Community funds for the period 2007-2013 can be used to support the Natura 2000 network
- Organisation of workshops in all Member States to explain on the spot how the Community funds for the period 2007-2013 can be used for the Natura 2000 network.

These workshops are aimed at informing and supporting Member States on how to apply the Community co-financing opportunities on the national level. National workshops will be held in all 25 EU countries to present the handbook and show how it is to be used. These workshops will also promote co-operation among all involved national authorities and stakeholders and include discussion of country specific problems and challenges. In addition to these 25 countries the consortium additionally aims to include Romania and Bulgaria.

A consortium comprising of WWF (Germany and EPO), nova-Institut (Germany) and Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) will be responsible for the preparation of the guidance handbook and the the workshops. The consortium will work in close liaison with the EU DG Environment and National Project Partners in each country.


The work started in October 2005. The consortiums aims to finalise the Handbook by March 2006 and conduct all 33 (36 if RO and BG are included) workshops during the period April-October 2006 so that the results can be used for the current programming of EU Funds in the MS.

A draft version of the Handbook was discussed with the relevant DG’s and the project steering group. This consultation is needed as the Handbook analyses all relevant EU funding instruments (Rural Development, Regional Fund, Social Fund; Cohesion Fund, Fisheries Fund; LIFE+ and 7th Research Framework Programme). Beside the official consultation feedback was included from the network of consortium partners in order to make sure the Handbook will be a useful tool for MS to secure funding for Natura 2000. Currently the final version is to be agreed by the commission by interservice consultation procedure.

A major mean to promote the Handbook but also to discuss the funding situation in the relevant MS will be secured via national workshops. The consortium has a network of Partner organisations in all MS whose task is to prepare the workshops jointly with the relevant Ministries. Planning of the workshops has begun in most of the countries and a preparatory meeting for all partners has taken place in Berlin on 13 and 14 February 2006. First workshops will take place from April onwards.

If you like to get more information about the project see the following webpage where you can download all relevant documents:

http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/env/financing_natura/library/?l=/&vm=detailed&sb=Title

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