



3Water-conference, 9. Nov. 2011, Brussels

Statement for the panel: Participation of private landowners in conserving and managing habitats and species in Natura 2000 areas – political view

- 1) Natura 2000 is a success model: the implementation of the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive resulted in about 18 percent N2000-sites (on land), much more than we had before. (in Germany roughly less than 4 % of nature protection sites, when I started my studies in 1978). And studies show eg: Birds of annex I do much better than birds outside protected areas (SPAs), for example farmland birds: they still show massive decline!
- 2) The Birds Directive (from 1979!) and the Habitats Directive (1992, but based on the Berne Convention from 1979), were adopted unanimously by the Member States, and after long discussions with all stakeholder groups.
- 3) They are also no “new” instruments! But in some Member States, including Germany, the implementation in a) national (and regional) law, and b) the designation of the sites was often incomplete and much delayed. Remember that the Member States in the BD committed themselves to designate the SPAs by 1981! In the network of marine N2000-sites there are still big gaps!
- 4) The full implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives (eg. full designation of sites by 2012), and massive improvement of FCS, and therefore implementation of Management Plans (MPs) is the first of six priority targets of the new EC biodiversity strategy (COM(2011) 244 final, 3. May 2011), supported by Council on 21. June 2011. To reach the new 2020 target, adopted by the Eur. Council in March 2010 and the targets of the CBD strategic plan, adopted in Nagoya in October 2010.
- 5) After the designation phase we are now, again with delay, in the important phase of developing and implementing Management Plans (MPs) for all sites.
- 6) How to do this, and how to reach the targets of “Favourable Conservation Status” (FSC), is again in the responsibility of the Member States: both directives are paradigms (Musterbeispiele) for the “subsidiarity principle” ! This is done both on EU level (eg. actual expert group on N2000-management, with all stakeholder groups), and – I hope in all Members States – on national, regional and local level (eg. “round tables” in Schleswig-Holstein).
- 7) There is a whole range from binding MPs for single N2000-sites to framework plans, from obligatory measures to voluntary agreements with financial incentives.
- 8) And not to forget, money and jobs:
 - 7.1. LIFE has helped a lot! And is still very important! So NGOs and farmers should closely work together, to improve LIFE: make it less bureaucratic, and especially put more money in the

hat: up to now LIFE is about 0,2 percent of the EU-budget, we need at least 1 percent (1 billion Euro/year).

7.2. And we need a total of 6 billion Euro/year for Natura 2000, either by special funds (30. November ?) and/or by earmarking in the CAP.

7.3. TEEB and other studies have proved that this is the best investment we can make: the ecosystem services of a global protected network covering 15 % of the land and 30 % of the sea would amount to 3,1 trillion Euro, 8 % of the world's annual GDP !

7.4. In the EU, an estimate of 14,6 million jobs (7 % of total employment) depend on the conservation of biodiversity. Following a new study, investing the 6 billion Euro/year in Natura 2000 could create 180.000 jobs, often in economically less developed areas!

Questions for the panel discussion, and answers:

- How to motivate landowners to participate more in the management of Natura 2000?

Is it necessary to motivate them more? In many German regions, landowners, esp. farmers, are asking to be included in the N2000-sites because of the advantages!

- Could fiscal advantages and other incentives would motivate landowners to participate?

Yes, they clearly do – therefore farmers are interested to join (see above) ! But the financial support could be higher – therefore help in fight eg. for more LIFE-money and a Natura-budget !

- What can Natura 2000 bring to landowners and rural stakeholders?

Citizens want to spend public money for public goods, and ask for more engagement in nature conservation and conserving their cultural landscapes, eg. fields with hedgerows, orchards, broad-leaved “natural” woods instead of coniferous “forests”. Consumers ask for healthy products. N2000 helps farmers and private forest owners to satisfy these demands!

- Is there a risk for landowners who participate in the management of N2000?
- How can the cooperation between landowners and the administration be improved?

In the discussions, from the very beginning all stakeholder groups were involved. This must also be the case when developing and implementing the N2000 management plans. There are several studies, how to improve that:

- In several German regions, “round tables” have proved to be the best solutions (eg. Schleswig-Holstein).
 - In North Rhine-Westphalia, the development and implementation of the MPs is organised by the local biological stations (Biologische Stationen), and in their steering board the authorities, landowner / user groups (farmers, private forest owners, beekeepers etc.) and NGOs are represented.
 - Also in Belgium (Flanders), a recent study of the COMM says (draft for expert group 23. Nov.), all stakeholders “are involved from the beginning and help produce the plans, are consulted on drafts...” (Fact sheets, p. 17)
- Could N2000 be helpful for the communication of land managers towards the general public about environmental services which they provide to the society?

Yes, of course! In recent public polls, eg. the 2010 flash-Eurobarometer, more than 80 % of European citizens say that biodiversity loss is a serious problem, and that there should be done more at national, European and global levels. The findings of TEEB and other studies clearly

show the enormous financial feedback of investments in nature. And: when N2000 is communicated in the right way, it makes people proud of their region, when they e.g. host rare species or habitat types! Tourism (not only eco-tourism), producers (“mineral water from N2000 site xy”) and even car-manufacturers mostly use “Nature” as one of their main motives!

Claus Mayr, NABU, Director of European Affairs, 09. Nov. 2011

Contact:

Claus.Mayr@NABU.de

www.NABU.de

www.birdlife.org