



Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process

2nd Mediterranean Natura 2000 Seminar

Limassol, Cyprus
*14 to 16 November 2017

**VENUE: Kapetanius Odysseia Hotel, Enaerios Complex, 28th October & Makarios III Avenue,
3309 Limassol, Cyprus**

Host: Terra Cypria, the Cyprus conservation foundation, with the support of the Environment Department and the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development & Environment, Cyprus.

** Note that the Seminar starts on Tuesday, 14th November 2017 (Day 1) at 8:30 am with the registration of participants. Please be on time to register so that the programme can begin at 9:00 am prompt.*

Delegates from overseas will have to travel on Monday 13th November to be in good time for the start of the programme.

The organisers and the host, Terra Cypria, the Cyprus conservation foundation, gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the Environment Department and the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development & Environment, Cyprus, for this Natura 2000 Biogeographical Seminar.



Host organisation coordinator: Lefkios Sergides, Terra Cypria, the Cyprus conservation foundation

Host support team: **Names to be specified**

Indicative Outline Programme

This Seminar is organised as part of the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process. Launched by the European Commission in 2011, the aim is to improve and strengthen the implementation of Natura 2000. The primary purpose of the Natura 2000 Seminars is to help sharpen focus on the strategic targets to be achieved and contribute to meeting the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy objectives.

The Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process provides the means for Member States and expert stakeholder networks to:

- Work together and collaborate on practical habitat management issues identified as being of common priority and shared importance;
- Take stock of the current conservation status of specific priority habitats in a biogeographical region and determine what needs to be done collectively to improve, maintain or restore the condition of habitats and species of Community interest;
- Share experience, build knowledge and develop consensus about priority management actions required for particular habitat types or species, as well as to address specific themes;
- Take specific agreed cooperative actions to restore or maintain favourable conservation status for those habitats that fall within their territory;
- Network and exchange management experience information and to continue building know-how about the most effective ways to achieve favourable conservation status of habitats and species of Community importance.

The Fitness Check evaluation of the EU Nature Directives has revealed that the effectiveness of the Directives has been constrained by, among other factors, the lack of and insufficient targeting of funding, limited stakeholder awareness and cooperation, and gaps in knowledge. It has also highlighted the need to put in place effective conservation systems, enabling delivering the Directives' objectives, having full regard to the socio-economic context in which they operate¹. As part of the follow-up to the Fitness Check evaluation the Commission has proposed to refocus the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process, for the latter to better contribute to the establishment of coherent, effective and efficient conservation systems throughout the EU. The Process should in particular deliver improved coherence in conservation status evaluation and setting conservation objectives and priorities. It should promote the identification of best practices in conservation management, in seizing funding opportunities, in dealing with communication and stakeholder involvement and in improving governance of Natura 2000 the network in order to optimize conservation results at biogeographical level. The process should deliver strengthened cooperation and sharing of experience on common challenges, including those related to the specific socio-economic context and to cross-border issues and agree biogeographical-level roadmaps for cooperative action.

In order to help re-focussing the work at the second Mediterranean Natura 2000 Seminar this seminar will be organised around four large thematic clusters in the context of which also more specific issues related to the so-called 'top 20' habitat types habitat types can be addressed as appropriate. The four 'Habitat Working Groups' of the first Mediterranean Seminar will be replaced by four 'Thematic Working Groups' corresponding to the following thematic clusters – these are:

1. **Assessment and sustainable development of ecosystems** (in particular, water related services) – this group may include subjects such as: setting restoration priorities, interpretation of habitats, favourable reference values ...
2. **Conservation objectives, monitoring and evaluation** – for example, approaches to integrated planning, ways to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of conservation measures, ...
3. **Effective governance models for integrated approaches to implement Natura 2000** – for example, effective Natura 2000 governance structures, participatory approaches ...
4. **Addressing threats and pressure on Mediterranean habitats and species** – for example, ways to assess and mitigate negative impacts of land use pressures, dealing with ecological connectivity ...

Specifically, the seminar will identify and, where possible, agree a biogeographical-level roadmap for cooperative action, including future practical management actions that are required to improve favourable conservation status. Through the Process' networking events, as well as the Natura 2000 Communication Platform, the collaboration amongst all stakeholders will be encouraged and enhanced.

¹ See SWD(2016) 472 final, section 7

Introduction to the 2nd Mediterranean Natura 2000 Seminar

The second Mediterranean Natura 2000 Seminar is being hosted by the Terra Cypria, the Cyprus conservation foundation, with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development & Environment of Cyprus. The Seminar provides an important opportunity for participants to improve and strengthen the implementation of Natura 2000 in the Region and ensure progress towards the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy targets. Progress includes building common understanding of practical management and thematic issues identified as being of common priority, stimulating new know-how about effective management approaches and developing cooperation and networking activities on issues of shared importance.

The Seminar is a milestone in a continuing process of networking, information sharing and knowledge building, of direct benefit to stakeholders across the Mediterranean Biogeographical Region. Over three days, the Mediterranean Seminar will aim to generate concrete outputs as identified by participants, which can be further developed following the Seminar. Although some attention will be given to reviewing progress since the first Mediterranean Seminar (held in Thessaloniki, Greece, May, 2014), the focus is very much forward-looking - this will include:

- Taking stock of the activities implemented since the kick-off seminar and identify and agree further concrete actions and cooperation priorities, which can be developed and taken forward by various actors in the Region – with the aim of reaching favourable conservation status (FCS).
- Identifying possible new conservation issues/priorities – new cooperation actions based, in particular, on the lessons learnt from the latest State of Nature Report, including a 'Roadmap' of agreed future collaborative actions.
- Compiling sources of information and experience that capitalise on completed projects, available guidance and potential new proposals to increase synergies and collaboration opportunities.

The seminar will also discuss:

- The possibilities and practicalities of identifying restoration priorities, including the so-called 'low hanging fruit' (LHF) i.e. habitat and species whose conservation status could be improved in the short-term using reasonably straightforward management measures. This reflects the urgency to demonstrate progress towards achieving the targets of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy in the short to medium term.
- How to develop the most useful form of cooperation and implementation strategies for biogeographical level favourable reference values (FRVs).
- Any additional conservation issues of common interest that will have been identified in the expert consultation process preceding the seminar.

As a reference for discussions during the Seminar, the Seminar Input Document will be made available sufficiently in advance of the seminar. It will also be available on the Natura 2000 Platform and will be available to download from the following link:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/platform/knowledge_base/135_mediterranean_region_en.htm

2nd Mediterranean Natura 2000 Seminar – Indicative Outline Programme

DAY 0: Monday 13 November 2017 – arrival in Limassol		
18.00 (TBC)	Pre-seminar briefing meeting	<i>For chairs, facilitators and other key actors ONLY!</i>

NOTE THAT ALL TIMINGS WITHIN THE PROGRAMME ARE INDICATIVE ONLY.

THE VENUE FOR THE SEMINAR ON ALL THREE DAYS OF THE PROGRAMME IS:

Kapetanos Odysseia Hotel, Enaerios Complex, 28th October & Makarios III Avenue, 3309 Limassol, Cyprus

FOR CONVENIENCE AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS, IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT PARTICIPANTS BOOK THEIR HOTEL ACCOMMODATION IN THE VENUE. THIS CAN BE DONE BY EMAILING THE HOTEL DIRECTLY VIA:

odysseiahotel@kapetanosgroup.com

PLEASE QUOTE "2ND MEDITERRANEAN NATURA 2000 SEMINAR" WHEN BOOKING YOUR ROOM TO BENEFIT FROM THE NEGOTIATED SEMINAR RATES. ALSO, PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY BOOKINGS MADE VIA INTERNET WILL BE SUBJECT TO A SUPPLEMENT, WHICH WILL BE LESS ECONOMICAL.

DAY 1: Tuesday 14 November

Time	Activity	Location / Session objective
08.30 to 09.00	Registration	Coffee will be available!
09.00 to 10.30	Official welcome & introductory statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaker from Terra Cypria • Nicos Kouyialis – Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development & Environment • François Kremer - Policy Coordinator Natura 2000, European Commission, DG Environment 	Official welcome & introductory statements
	The Natura 2000 Biogeographical Seminar Process in its strategic context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • François Kremer - Policy Coordinator Natura 2000, European Commission, DG Environment 	Present the seminar and its context, along with the approach and methods to be used

Time	Activity	Location / Session objective
	<p>Overview of the seminar programme and the thematic working groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neil McIntosh – ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation 	<p><i>Thematic working groups are scheduled for Day 2 - an Annex will be developed to include a summary description. The group themes are as follows:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment and sustainable development of ecosystems (in particular water related services) 2. Conservation objectives, monitoring and evaluation 3. Effective governance models for integrated approaches to implement Natura 2000 4. Addressing threats and pressure on Mediterranean habitats and species
	<p>Introduction to the site visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaker TBC 	<p><i>The site visits provide participants with an opportunity to see 'on the ground' the threats and issues, management practices and management planning approaches being applied in different Natura 2000 sites. Experts and guides will provide overviews of the current status and condition of visited habitats, describe conservation objectives and measures and explain the features and management regimes. However, this is also an opportunity for participants to share experiences about related issues and management approaches in their countries.</i></p>
10.30 to 19.00 approx.	<p>Site visits - Departures from Limassol by coaches</p> <p><i>Participants will visit two Natura 2000 sites</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>MADARI - PAPOUTSA (Site Code: CY2000005) – this is both an SAC and an SPA. Participants will have the opportunity to walk a natural trail surrounded, amongst others, by the priority habitat 9390*, the endemic Cyprus Golden Oak. The area is also an SPA with code VOUNOKORFES MADARIS - PAPOUTSAS (Site Code: CY2000015).</i> • <i>Following that, participants will visit the Troodos Forest (SAC and SPA) ETHNIKO DASIKO PARKO TROODOUS (Site Code: CY5000004) and the Troodos Botanical Centre. Here, visitors have the chance to see the species of the centre, see how an old asbestos mine is being restored, explore the information in the Centre and watch a documentary for Troodos.</i> <p>PLEASE BRING WATER, SUNCREAM, INSECT REPELANT, SUITABLE OUTDOOR CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR. ALSO, PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BRING THEIR CAMERAS AND BINOCULARS.</p> <p>PACKED LUNCHES WILL BE AVAILABLE.</p> <p>ARRIVAL BACK IN LIMASSOL BY 19.00 (approx).</p>	

DAY 2: Wednesday 15 November 2017		
Time	Activity	Description/ Session objective
09.00 to 09.40	<p>Mediterranean Natura 2000 Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mora Aronsson, Sweden - European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity – an overview of the main conservation issues in the Mediterranean region, conservation status developments and the Low Hanging Fruits (LHF) methodology • Diego Garcia Ventura, Spain - Fundación Fernando González Bernáldez, EUROPARC Spain – an overview of the main threats & pressures affecting Natura 2000 management in the Mediterranean region and the scope for collaborative solutions 	Introducing some typical issues surrounding management of Natura 2000 habitats and species in the Mediterranean Region, reflecting on the field visits of the previous day
09.40 to 11.00	<p>Case study presentations focusing on thematic issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andreas Demetropoulos – Cyprus Wildlife Society – Turtle conservation in Cyprus – past, present & future – Natura 2000 issues. • Rafael Hidalgo – Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, Food & Environment, Spain – and/ or Prof. Dr. Antonio Camacho, University of Valencia – Evaluating conservation status to inform & improve Natura 2000 management for habitats & species. (TBC) • Zoe Russell – Scottish Natural Heritage – Using technology for site condition monitoring (the SWIFT application). • Kristijan Civic – Eurosite – Private land conservation in Europe: focus on the Mediterranean experience. • Thomas Galewski – Tour du Valat - Evaluating the impact of anthropogenic pressures and the efficiency of conservation measures on Mediterranean wetlands and their biodiversity. • Speaker TBC - TEN project, Trentino, Italy – Effective Natura 2000 governance structures & participatory approaches based on ecological homogeneous zones. 	See summary description in Annex 1.
11.00 to 11.30	Coffee break	

<p>11.30 to 13.00</p>	<p>4 x Thematic working groups</p> <p>1. Assessment and sustainable development of ecosystems Chair: Javier Cabello Facilitator: Teresa Pastor</p> <p>2. Conservation objectives, monitoring and evaluation Chair: TBC Facilitator: Diego Garcia Ventura</p> <p>3. Effective governance models for integrated approaches to implement Natura 2000 Chair: TBC Facilitator: Jinthe Roelofs</p> <p>4. Addressing threats and pressures to Mediterranean habitats and species Chair: Takis Tsintides Facilitator: Kristijan Civic</p>	<p><i>The aim during the group sessions on Day 2 is to identify future management issues and common priorities, particularly ones common to the Mediterranean region, especially where there would be scope to develop practical cooperative actions in future.</i></p> <p><i>Four Thematic Working Groups will work in parallel to identify common issues and potential practical solutions to strengthen implementation of Natura 2000 in the Mediterranean region. The same working groups continue after lunch and participants remain in their groups.</i></p> <p><i>These are interactive group working sessions, so please come along prepared to share your Natura 2000 experiences!</i></p> <p>(ANNEX 1 AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS OF THE THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS.)</p>
<p>13.00 to 14.30</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	
<p>14.30 to 18.00</p>	<p>4 x Thematic working groups (Coffee break 16.00 to 16.30)</p>	<p><i>Four Thematic Working Groups continue to work in parallel to identify common issues and potential practical solutions.</i></p>
<p>18:30 to 21:00</p>	<p>Knowledge Market</p> <p>The Knowledge Market will be officially opened by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs Ioanna Panayiotou – Environment Commissioner • Mr François Kremer - Policy Coordinator Natura 2000, European Commission, DG Environment <p>Following the official opening, a buffet and drinks reception will be served.</p>	<p><i>This interactive networking session is designed to stimulate discussion between Seminar participants, share and gather information, and to provide useful inputs for further projects, collaborations and co-operations.</i></p> <p><i>Recognising the important contributions and new opportunities from the LIFE Programme, the Knowledge Market will include completed or ongoing LIFE Projects in the Mediterranean Region, as well as LIFE Programme information.</i></p> <p><i>Participants are invited in advance to provide information material about (planned, ongoing or concluded) relevant Natura 2000 projects or related work. This may (but need not) be a poster and information folder/flyer.</i></p> <p><i>This is an informal information gathering opportunity – there are no presentations in plenary. Anyone attending the Seminar and interested to have space at the Knowledge Market should indicate this on the registration form, which will be provided shortly.</i></p> <p><i>Representatives from local stakeholder organisations and producers of local products will also be invited to this session.</i></p>

DAY 3: Thursday 16 November 2017		
<i>08.00 to 09.00</i>	<i>Finalise presentations</i>	<i>For working group chairs and facilitators only!</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Description/ Session objective</i>
09.00 to 09.10	Recap on Day 2 and introduction to Day 3	
09.10 to 09.40	The LIFE Programme	Opportunities available through the LIFE Programme to support implementation of activities identified by Mediterranean Seminar participants. Example of LIFE Projects and experience gains.
09.40 to 11.00	Plenary session reporting and discussion from Day 2 Thematic working groups	<p>The main aim of this session is to report each Thematic Working Group's discussions and, where possible, confirm cooperation actions identified for implementation in future.</p> <p>The feedback will focus on the key points and the outcomes achieved and agreed by each groups' participants during Day 2.</p>
11.00-11.30	Coffee break	
11.30 to 12.30	<p>Second Mediterranean Natura 2000 Seminar closing session</p> <p>Following a plenary discussion, a note of thanks will be given by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from host • François Kremer - Policy Coordinator Natura 2000, European Commission, DG Environment 	Reflecting on the feedback and earlier discussion, this final session aims to summarise outcomes, in particular noting specific cooperation actions identified on agreed common priorities.
12.30	Close	

Annex 1 – Thematic Working Groups – four thematic clusters of focus

Overall aim of the group sessions

With close reference to the EU Action Plan for nature, people and economy, each thematic working group session will aim to build common understanding about the practical steps necessary to ensure conservation of Mediterranean Natura 2000 habitat types and species at favourable status. In each thematic group, attention will be given to discussing and identifying Biogeographical-scale issues, illustrated by reference to direct experiences within individual countries, and formulate concrete ideas about how to strengthen implementation of Natura 2000 in practical ways.

The outputs from the group sessions will be collated in the Seminar Report. This will provide a biogeographical-level roadmap for cooperative action, including future practical management actions that are required to improve favourable conservation status. This will also inform future networking activities to be developed through the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process, as well as information and experience exchanges via the Natura 2000 Communication Platform, to broaden and inspire collaboration and cooperation between wider constituencies of stakeholders.

Thematic Working Groups

1. Assessment and sustainable development of ecosystems

Chair: Javier Cabello

Facilitator: Teresa Pastor

This group will focus on practical issues relating to the management of habitat types and species and in particular fundamental approaches and concepts that can be addressed at biogeographical region level. Already existing and applied methods will be discussed to understand the feasibility of reaching common understanding across the Mediterranean biogeographical region in relation to the following:

- Interpretation of habitat types;
- Favourable Reference Values;
- Standardized procedures for assessing conservation status;
- Possible criteria to (where possible) upgrade from national to biogeographical level, including appropriate indicators and targets to be achieved.

Interpretation of habitats is still considered problematic. The large number of vegetation relevés stored in main European databases can play a fundamental role to improve consistency of interpretation and resolve this issue. The group will discuss how and what types of guidelines, based on the available databases, may usefully be developed to tackle interpretation issues. One output from this group should be a roadmap of concrete future steps and defined recommendations.

2. Conservation objectives, monitoring and evaluation

Chair: TBC

Facilitator: Diego Garcia

Monitoring of conservation measures established for Special Areas of Conservation is still lacking in many Natura 2000 sites although it is central to effective management planning. Monitoring is an integral part of the management planning process especially effective when used to evaluate the impact of conservation measures and progress towards conservation objectives. This group will focus on practical experiences of: monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of conservation measures; tools and approaches used; and, setting conservation objectives. The group will seek to highlight an agreed way forward to improve the effectiveness of monitoring conservation measures in the Mediterranean biogeographical region.

Time will also be given to discussing approaches to setting restoration priorities. Effective monitoring is necessary with a view to assessing and evaluating the results of applied conservation and restoration measures in terms of

conservation impacts on habitats and species and to adapt the measures where necessary. Knowledge of best practices is critical to achieve (cost) effective restoration measures and meet targets. Conservation goals are best achieved when restoration of habitats is prioritized. This group will discuss and highlight aspects which are important to take into consideration when prioritizing restoration efforts in the Alpine biogeographical region. It will also address the 'Low hanging fruit' approach.

Therefore, the group will discuss the following specific points:

- Conservation measures and restoration priorities for habitat types and species at the Biogeographical level, based on their conservation status and pressures and threats identified.
- Identifying practical ways and opportunities to integrate conservation and restoration measures and priorities as part of the Natura 2000 Directives.
- Possible action plans for habitat types and species on a Biogeographical scale.
- Practical examples and opportunities to increase or allow for ecological connectivity.
- Within the Natura 2000 framework, how to address uncertainties – for example, in relation to climate change impacts - or take into account wider ecosystems and their management.

3. Effective governance models for integrated approaches to implement Natura 2000

Chair: TBC

Facilitator: Jinthe Roelofs

This group will focus on discussing approaches to integrating Natura 2000 into wider society – it will consider approaches used for integrated planning, governance arrangements that positively engage stakeholders, respecting cultures and the role of traditional knowledge, and the economic value of managing habitats and their ecosystem services. In particular, this group will seek to compare best practices in such areas.

Approaches to integrated planning

Natura 2000 management plans are important tools to achieve biodiversity goals. While being practical tools to support conservation planning, to be effective in achieving biodiversity goals, they should be integrated with other plans (such as forest plans, river plans, park plans, etc.). The group will share experience and approaches with integrated management planning and seek to identify best practice examples, while highlighting the main features to consider when integrating plans for Natura 2000 sites.

Effective Natura 2000 governance structures

Good and inclusive governance structures are essential for strengthening implementation of Natura 2000 at local and/or regional levels – engagement and direct involvement of stakeholders are critical for site management, conservation status assessment and monitoring. By comparing experiences and stakeholder engagement models and management practices, this group will indicate what makes and what should be considered to have good Natura 2000 governance models in the Mediterranean biogeographical region.

Cultural changes and the role of traditional knowledge

Semi-natural habitats in the Mediterranean biogeographical region derive from traditional management practices and land uses. The group will work to highlight future actions to prevent the loss of people's connectivity with the land.

4. Addressing threats and pressures to Mediterranean habitats and species

Chair: Takis Tsintides

Facilitator: Kristijan Civic

In the Mediterranean biogeographical region rural depopulation, invasive alien species, and climate change are amongst several important threats to the conservation status of Natura 2000 habitats and species. This group will focus on identifying the main management practices required to adapt or mitigate such threats, as well as ways to increase resistance and resilience. It will seek to highlight agreed ways forward to improve the effectiveness of conservation measures in the Mediterranean biogeographical region.

Widespread priority species and habitats will be discussed to identify species and habitats that are of major conservation concern across the Mediterranean biogeographical region. The group will analyse the possibility of considering how to address habitats and species not currently identified as priorities in the region.

Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) involves interpretation of definitions and methodologies vary among countries and regions - therefore, this group will also discuss what definitions and interpretations are in use currently and the feasibility of agreeing more consistency within the Mediterranean biogeographical region. As any assessment should enable a positive result to be achieved and mitigate negative impacts, it will be useful to take into consideration relevant ECJ rulings on Appropriate Assessments.

Ecological connectivity (Article 10) - not all species and habitats are represented in Natura 2000 sites. This group will discuss what management challenges this poses and how to generate more inclusive management approaches where Natura 2000 is central, but not exclusive. Group participants will identify which types of areas could be linked to the network and possible management measures for those species and habitats not well represented.