



Scoping study for an EU wide communications campaign on biodiversity and nature

Final report to the European Commission/DG ENV

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1. Executive summary

Introduction

Gellis Communications was contracted in August 2007 by the European Commission, DG Environment, to conduct a **scoping study for a Europe-wide communications campaign on biodiversity and nature**.

The following document aims to assist DG ENV to identify the campaign format most feasible to meet the objectives of its communication '**Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 and beyond: sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being**' and the attached Action Plan. This Final Report will provide guidance for the development of Terms of Reference related to the immediate call for tender for the future campaign.

The Final Report has drawn from various sources, most notably the findings of the initial *Market research of biodiversity campaigns*, the subsequent *Field research (and interviews) with key players*, our *Analysis of relevant public service campaigns* (looking at non-biodiversity best-practice campaigns), and a Flash Eurobarometer *public opinion survey* on the issue of biodiversity. All study phases were supported by in-house specialists and our partners from renowned environmental institute **Ecologic**. The results and findings underwent a final quality check by an independent Panel of Experts before being submitted to the client.

Key findings

1. **Build on the term 'biodiversity'** – The term 'biodiversity' is known by more than 60% of Europe's general public and accepted amongst all stakeholder groups. The campaign should thus not replace the word, but should establish a catchy way of communicating the subject of biodiversity loss and its consequences.
2. **Biodiversity threats are more or less well-known** – Public survey and expert interviews revealed that the potential campaign target groups have already a basic understanding of the main threats – pollution, climate change, excessive land use. Therefore, less emphasis should be placed on the threats so that the future campaign can go a step further and emphasise the impacts of biodiversity loss.
3. **Policy framework needs no improvement, but implementation** – Interviewed stakeholders agreed that the existing European policy framework is sufficient and well developed. What is at stake is its implementation at national, regional, and, more importantly, local level.
4. **Mass media is key to reaching the general public** – When asked about their main source of information about biodiversity-related issues, 52% of respondents named television, 42% the Internet, and 33% newspapers and magazines. Any campaign targeting the general public will have to take this into consideration.
5. **Give local examples** – Making the issue of biodiversity loss comprehensible requires breaking it down to the impact it has on local communities. Target audiences must be able to relate personally and thus feel motivated to change their attitude.

Strategic campaign principles and objectives

Campaign principles

➤ **Slogan and messaging**

The success of a campaign rests on picking the correct core slogan and layering this with persuasive messages and arguments which adapt according to the dynamics of the campaign and the levels of awareness across Europe.

➤ **Corporate identity & branding**

A successful biodiversity campaign will have to understand the dynamics of branding and use these principles to build a larger and stronger base of support among stakeholders and the general public.

➤ **Advocacy**

Advocates are paragons – stakeholders who will tend to be one ‘step’ ahead of the general public in terms of awareness and knowledge about biodiversity loss. A successful campaign will identify these advocates, nurture and constantly feed into them.

➤ **Third party endorsement**

It is important to correctly identify and court possible sources of third party endorsement – and feed key messages to them. Furthermore, the campaign should then capitalise on the endorsement and make use of creative tools to ‘multiply’ that message, such as websites, publications, speeches, media outreach, etc.

➤ **The “multiplier” principle**

To overcome budgetary shortcomings, a successful campaign will correctly identify and make creative use of key multipliers.

➤ **The model of ‘concentric circles’ in a public awareness campaign**

Successful campaigns tend to use a model of ‘concentric circles’ in their strategy. This means that communications should focus primarily on one innermost group in the beginning – and then move outwards until the public at large is finally reached.

➤ **Response mechanisms (2-way communication with key target audiences)**

Target audiences must be able to respond and to feel they are contributing to the process. Hence, there should be a system to ensure 2-way communication in the public awareness campaign.

➤ **Constant research and verification**

The future communications campaign will need a built-in system of research and verification to establish initial benchmarks, test messages and tactics, conduct target group surveys to test support, and adapt – where necessary – campaign messages and tactics.

Targets

According to the EU Biodiversity Action Plan to 2010 and beyond, the target of the Communications campaign is to have 10 million Europeans actively engaged in biodiversity conservation by 2010, and 15 million by 2013.

This can only be achieved by a change of attitude in daily life of European general public, improved implementation of European biodiversity policy at national, regional and local level, and an increased exchange of knowledge and best practices amongst stakeholders.

General campaign objectives

The overarching objective is to halt the loss of biodiversity in Europe by 2010 and increase the EU's contribution to the global target of significantly reducing biodiversity loss in the world by 2010.

Gellis Communications identified three general campaign objectives. All three of them must be met, if the campaign is to succeed in achieving its overarching objective and targets.

► VISIBILITY

The communications campaign aims at enhancing visibility of the importance of biodiversity and the (global) issue of biodiversity loss. It shall furthermore raise awareness amongst policy makers, stakeholders, and the wider public about the role both the European Commission on the one hand and European citizens on the other, play in biodiversity conservation.

► MULTIPLICATION

The communications campaign must aim at identifying potential partners, provide them with tailor-made information and turn them into multipliers as a means of mobilising key audience groups. Securing and capitalising on the power of endorsement will give the message credibility as well as reach/depth.

► SUSTAINABILITY

The communications campaign has to provide guidance for concrete action to all target groups, thus assuring the sustained impact on biodiversity conservation. By adopting a step-by-step approach, the campaign is designed to build on the strengths of each phase. The campaign itself also has to be as "green" – as environmentally friendly – as possible.

Campaign features

The consultant identified a set of methodological features that should preferably be integrated into any future campaign model, regardless of its organisational structure.

- Address all relevant target groups

Any campaign must bear in mind that long term impact will only be achieved if the key message has been understood by all relevant target groups and led to a change in attitude.

- Promote the common definition of 'biodiversity' in a tangible manner

The definition of the term 'biodiversity' (and inferentially 'biodiversity loss') by the *Convention on Biological Diversity*¹ is commonly accepted by policy makers and researchers around the globe. It is the core task of any communications campaign to promote this definition in a tangible, understandable format among a widest possible audience.

The campaign must be based on **key messages** that take the holistic meaning of biodiversity and its loss into consideration and is able to concisely explain the meaning and intention of the communications campaign.

- Build capacity to support the sustained impact of the campaign

In order to achieve a lasting consciousness and change in attitude, the campaign must feature elements of capacity building – of transferring applicable knowledge to the target groups.

- Focus on multipliers

The European Commission will have to develop a campaign strategy that focuses on identifying, integrating and motivating multipliers of various kinds, such as *biodiversity advocates* and relevant *stakeholder interest groups*.

- Involve and closely integrate the Member States in the development and implementation of the communications campaign.

It is recommended to establish campaign structures that integrate participation of Member State representatives in planning, implementation, and evaluation aspects.

- Motivate and enable the general public to take individual action

There is an expressed need for tangible and practical guidelines for individual action. The EU-led biodiversity campaign can become a funnel for such (existing) material and become the number one information platform for the layman.

¹ CBD, Article 2 (<http://www.cbd.int/convention/articles.shtml?a=cbd-02>)

- ***Support the implementation of the existing policy framework for halting the loss of biodiversity at Member State level.***

A European-wide campaign would give visibility to the subject, enhance awareness amongst the general public and relevant stakeholder groups, and thus assist policy makers and public authorities in their efforts to gain political support and ease their attempt to acquire additional budget resources for the implementation of biodiversity-related initiatives.

- ***Establish joint networks of EU institutions and relevant European trade associations to support the implementation of an EU-wide biodiversity policy.***

It is vital to join forces with influential European umbrella organisations to amplify the campaign message(s), gain access to the organisations' membership and information channels, and profit from their credibility amongst the respective stakeholders.

- ***Reach out to Europe's youth***

Younger generations are the most receptive target audience for environmental concerns. The future campaign needs to take advantage of this, make use of educational structures and new ways of communicating, and build on the youth's important role as multipliers amongst their peers and towards their parent generation.

Campaign options

The contractor was assigned to present in the Final Report of this scoping study three feasible models for the future communications campaign. The European Commission may subsequently draw their conclusions and base their call for tender on one or more of these options.

Option I – the decentralised approach

Characteristics:

1. A decentralised umbrella campaign puts the major share of the campaign implementation in the hands of the EU Member States.
2. The European Commission is responsible for the development of the overarching campaign strategy, the supervision of the implementation and the evaluation. The strategy however only defines the key parameters of the project, such as
 - ▶ Formulation of the policy aims
 - ▶ Identification of target groups
 - ▶ Definition of Corporate Identity, incl. key message(s), slogan and logo
 - ▶ Reporting on critical success factors
3. The European Commission, by and large, does not engage in any direct communications outreach to the target group(s). This task is assigned to selected Member State projects.
4. A lesser proportion of the budget is used for the central coordination tasks. The main portion of financial resources is distributed to projects at Member State level that are in line with the overall campaign strategy.

Option II – the centralised approach

Characteristics:

- 1) A centralised campaign puts all organisational and financial resources in the hand of the European Commission and its campaign organiser.
- 2) The central campaign management is responsible for the development, execution and evaluation of the campaign strategy. The strategy therefore defines all key parameters of the project, such as
 - ▶ Formulation of the policy aims
 - ▶ Identification of target groups
 - ▶ Development of a **Corporate Identity** for the campaign, covering visual elements, such as logo or campaign website, but also verbal elements, such as slogans, taglines, or key messages.
 - ▶ Planning, implementation, supervision and evaluation of concrete actions (events, development and distribution of information material, establishment of stakeholder focus groups, press relations, etc.).

- ▶ Determination of success factors (positive change in public awareness, development of national biodiversity strategies, increase of public/private funding for biodiversity-related initiatives, etc.)
- 3) Member States' authorities have very limited influence on the campaign and are only involved during the initial planning phase and the evaluation of the campaign.
- 4) The European Commission and its contractor are in charge of all outreach activities, both to the general public and to the stakeholder groups. Member States and other players may make use of the centrally produced communication tools, but may not modify them substantially.
- 5) All financial resources are used for centrally organised initiatives. These may also reach out to Member States, regional or local level, but still remain under the financial and organisational control of the European level.

Option III – the semi-centralised approach

Characteristics:

- 1) A semi-centralised campaign structure joins elements of the centralised and the decentralised approach:
 - a) The development of the Campaign Strategy, the creation of the Corporate Identity guidelines and the implementation of certain Europe-wide communication actions is assigned to the central campaign management.
 - b) The larger section of activities at national, but also regional and local level is dealt with by Member States and/or regional and local authorities.
- 2) The '**shared implementation**' concept is based on the campaign strategy, which is developed jointly by the European Commission (and its contractor) and Member State representatives.
- 3) The distribution of financial resources remains at the European level, but limited budget shares may be used to contribute to implementation at Member State level
- 4) The implementation at Member State level is founded on **customised country plans**. These plans are to be developed by dedicated Working Groups (see *Implementation* below).

2. Introduction

In 2006, the European Commission published its communication '**Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 – and beyond: Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being**' (COM (2006) 216 final). Attached to this communication is an Action Plan to 2010 and beyond, presenting specific targets and actions in relation to each objective and supporting measure.

Supporting measure four of the Action Plan – '**Building public education, awareness and participation for biodiversity**' – includes action B.4.1.1, to develop and implement an EU wide communication campaign on biodiversity. This action includes two targets:

- 10 million Europeans actively engaged in biodiversity conversation by 2010
- 15 million Europeans actively engaged in biodiversity conversation by 2013

Referring to this action the European Commission's Directorate General for Environment (DG ENV) plans to launch in 2008 a communications campaign for a period of three years.

To carry out such a campaign with maximum impact, DG ENV published in April 2007 a call for tenders requesting submissions for a '**Scoping Study for an EU-wide Communications campaign on Biodiversity and Nature**' (DG ENV.A.1/ETU/2007/0030r). Gellis Communications was awarded this contract in August 2007.

The overall aim of the scoping study is to help establish detailed campaign objectives, key messages, target audiences, framework and components of the communication campaign by developing three relevant options of what shape this campaign could take.

Based on the four pillars of:

1. market research,
2. field research with key players,
3. best practice analyses, and
4. public survey,

Gellis Communications presents the three options within this Final Report.

The results should enable DG ENV to develop the Terms of Reference for a future communications campaign focused on biodiversity loss across the EU-27.

3. Situation analysis

In the 1970s, the EU started to actively implement legislation on the issue of biodiversity in the form of the Council Directive 79/409/EEC, commonly referred to as the **Birds Directive**. In 1992 followed the **Habitats Directive**², which, together with the Birds Directive, forms the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy.

In the same year, the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**³ published its framework, which was ratified by the EU in 1993:

“The objectives of this Convention, to be pursued in accordance with its relevant provisions, are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies, and by appropriate funding.”

Considering the dramatically increasing biodiversity loss over the last decades, the EU adopted its **Communication on a European Biodiversity Strategy**⁴ (hereafter referred to as the 'Communication') in 1998. Its aims were to anticipate, prevent and combat the causes of significant reduction or loss of biodiversity at the source and within the CBD framework.

The continuously alarming rates of biodiversity loss, both in the EU and globally, spurred Heads of State and Government to make further commitments. At the **EU Spring Council 2001**, EU leaders decided to halt the loss of biodiversity in Europe by 2010 and, together with other world leaders at the **World Summit for Sustainable Development 2002**⁵, also agreed to significantly reduce the current rate of loss globally by 2010.

Over the past decade, the issue of biodiversity has continued to climb up on the priority list of EU policies – albeit too slowly in the eyes of many campaigners. Nevertheless, this consciousness is reflected within the **6th Environment Action Programme 2002-2012**⁶, with Biodiversity named one of the top four priorities of the programme. For that reason, the European Commission adopted the Communication 'Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 – and beyond: Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being' to illustrate its commitment to prioritising biodiversity and to recognise that existing efforts needed to be strengthened in order to achieve the 2010 targets.

The Communication identifies **four key policy areas**:

1. biodiversity in the EU,
2. the EU and global biodiversity,
3. biodiversity and climate change, and
4. the knowledge base.

² Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

³ www.cbd.int

⁴ Communication of the European Commission to the Council and to the Parliament on a European Community Biodiversity Strategy COM (98)42

⁵ www.un.org/events/wssd

⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/index.htm>

Referring to these four policy areas the Communication defines **10 priority objectives**:

1. safeguarding the EU's most important habitats and species,
2. conserving and restoring biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU countryside,
3. conserving and restoring biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU marine environment,
4. reinforcing compatibility of regional and territorial development with biodiversity in the EU,
5. reducing the impact on EU biodiversity of invasive alien species and alien genotypes,
6. strengthening the effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services,
7. strengthening support for biodiversity and ecosystem services in EU external assistance,
8. reducing the impact of international trade on global biodiversity and ecosystem services,
9. supporting biodiversity adaptation to climate change, and
10. strengthening the knowledge base.

The Communication also specifies four key supporting measures related to **adequate financing, strengthening EU decision-making, building partnerships and promoting public education, awareness and participation**.

The fourth supporting measure includes action B.4.1.1 – to develop and implement an EU-wide communications campaign. This action point provided the basis for the current Scoping Study.

4. Methodology

On the basis of its tender bid and the expected deliverables, Gellis used a variety of analytical tools and methodologies to develop three campaign options as outlined in this final report, namely:

- Market research of biodiversity campaigns
- Field research with key players
- Analysis of relevant public service campaigns
- Public opinion survey
- Expert Panel

The research was largely carried out in a step-by-step manner, whereby the results of one method inevitably influenced the next one or more.

The Methodology (and initial findings) is explained in detail in the Scoping Study **Interim Report**, delivered on 3rd of December 2007.

4.1. Market Research

The assignment within this step was to identify and analyse relevant biodiversity campaigns. Gellis therefore undertook three actions of analysis:

4.1.1. *Green Spider Network (GSN) survey*

The Terms of Reference already provide a general indication of potential sources for information on biodiversity campaigns. Gellis investigated in particular existing or planned public campaigns among the 27 EU-Member States with the help of the *Green Spider Network*⁷.

For that reason, Gellis developed a survey and disseminated it to all members of the GSN. In this way, Gellis was able to identify and analyse a representative sample of implemented or ongoing public sector communication activities on the issue of biodiversity within the Member States.

4.1.2. *Stakeholder interviews*

In order to identify a significant sample of stakeholders and their campaigns, Gellis performed a **Digital Mapping** exercise. The objective of this approach was to map the policy issue of biodiversity on the Internet in order to establish the **range of actors** and identify **best practice** examples of communication and information tools/campaigns.

The preliminary selection of stakeholder categories and geographic scope was determined by consultancy with the European Commission and Gellis' expert partner Ecologic⁸.

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/networks/greenspider/index_en.htm

⁸ <http://www.ecologic.de/>

4.1.3. Analysis of relevant campaigns on biodiversity/case studies

The initial brief overview allowed the project partners to select seven best practice examples and have a more detailed look at these campaigns.

- **3** national public campaigns from within the EU-27
- **1** national campaign from within the EU-27 performed by a non-governmental actor
- **1** national campaign from outside the EU
- **1** multi-national/global campaign performed by an Intergovernmental Organisation
- **1** multi-national/global campaign performed by a key NGO

The analysis of these campaigns was conducted in two ways:

a. Best practice analysis

This best practice analysis was required to study in detail workable communication and information strategies already implemented by other organisations, active in the same field. The results of this exercise helped Gellis to define a set of **benchmarks and communication tools** that may be applied during the implementation of a future EU Biodiversity Campaign.

b. Multi criteria analysis

Each of the campaigns studied were considered in terms of the methodology adopted, with in addition an evaluation of their effectiveness and relevance. Further, useful and practicable examples of best practice from each selected campaign were explained in the Scoping Study.

4.2. Field research with key players

The assignment was to gather data from leading stakeholders in the area of biodiversity and to analyse how various biodiversity campaigns can have an impact on present and future EU initiatives.

On the basis of the preliminary *Market Research on Biodiversity Campaigns* and DG ENV recommendations, Gellis Communications identified **30 key players** (campaign managers, EU institutions officials, representatives of international institutions, NGOs, interest groups, food and energy companies, media, academia, etc.) with whom semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted during a three week period.

Examples of interview partners

Key player categories	Example
Public authority information managers/officers	Lars Berg – Swedish Ministry of Environment
EU officials from institutions & bodies	Leticia Martinez Aguilar – European Commission, DG Fisheries; Ivone Pereira Martins - EEA
International Governmental Organisations	Peter Kearns – OECD
NGOs	Jean-Jacques Blanchon – Fondation Nicolas Hulot
Interest groups	Tanja Runge – COPA-COGECA
Tourism companies	Mila Dahle – TUI
Energy companies	Luke Evenbom – Vattenfall
Media	Tom Müller – GEO
Academia	Jürgen Tack – Flemish Institute for Nature and Forest

The interviews were based on first conclusions drawn from the initial *Market Research on Biodiversity Campaigns* and from discussions with stakeholders in DG Environment. They focused on a broad range of biodiversity-related questions and aimed at providing the contractor with a comprehensive overview of issues pertinent to the various sectors.

The expert interviews answered questions about

- Biodiversity-related terminology
- Causes and factors for biodiversity loss
- Sufficiency of policy frameworks
- Biodiversity-related activities of the respective stakeholder organisation
- Structure and added value of the future EU-led communications campaign

4.3. Analysis of relevant public service campaigns

In addition to investigating best practice drawn from biodiversity campaigns, Gellis also analysed other public service campaigns as they had the potential to provide guidance in the development of a future Commission-led communications campaign.

In addition to the analysis of biodiversity-related initiatives (4.1.3.), Gellis carried out research on **three major Europe-wide public services campaigns**. The contractor analysed the selected campaigns, highlighted best practice and shortcomings, and drew parallels with the future EU-wide biodiversity communication campaign.

4.4. Public opinion survey

Based on discussions with DG Environment and the results of the market research, the contractor developed a questionnaire for an opinion poll targeted at the general public in all 27 EU Member States in order to provide national benchmarks.

The questionnaire was used as part of a **Flash Eurobarometer survey**⁹ and enabled Gellis to evaluate the awareness of the general public on the issue of biodiversity. It tackled six main areas:

1. Awareness of the terminology of biodiversity and its loss
2. Level of information about biodiversity loss
3. Threats to biodiversity
4. Anticipation of seriousness of the problem
5. Recognition of the importance of biodiversity conservation
6. Awareness of the Natura 2000¹⁰ network

The results of the survey can serve as **benchmarks** to indicate progress and ultimately success of the future campaign on biodiversity.

4.5. Expert Panel

As an important advisory body and the top layer of our internal quality control, Gellis established an independent Panel of Experts for this specific project. It was composed of four communications experts of different yet complementary levels of expertise and experience. None of them were involved in the ongoing development of this scoping study. At various intervals, they were called upon to evaluate progress and provide unbiased advice.

Following review of the Interim Report, the panel received Gellis' draft final report, including our analysis of three potential options for the campaign format. The Expert Panel convened for a one-day meeting to discuss the findings, provide feedback to Gellis' recommendations and provide suggestions for adaptations. This last quality check was to ensure that each approach represents a feasible option for the European Commission.

⁹ Flash Eurobarometer 219: *Attitudes of Europeans towards the issue of biodiversity*
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

¹⁰ <http://www.natura.org/>

5. Key findings

The following chapter highlights the main findings previously explained in the study's Interim Report. The following issues have been deemed the most relevant when it comes to defining the core elements of a future biodiversity communication campaign.

A summary of the methodology that has been applied to achieve these results can be found in chapter 4 of this report.

a. Terminology

“The term ‘biodiversity’ must be better communicated, not replaced”

Initial discussions, both with the Commission services and with representatives of the Green Spider Network, gave a rather divergent answer on the question of whether the term biodiversity was suitable for a larger-scale communications campaign or not. A number of voices tended towards replacing or minimising this word – given its technical or even scientific character in some languages – in favour of another term (as yet unidentified) which might be perceived as more ‘understandable’ and tangible.

However, comprehensive research and expert interviews (see Interim Report, chapter 1) and the results of the Flash Eurobarometer tend to affirm use of the word ‘biodiversity’.

Whilst the term ‘biodiversity’ may not be fully and properly understood by all target groups, it is nevertheless well-established and known not only to stakeholders, but also to a broader public. Among the Eurobarometer respondents, 65% are already aware of the word *biodiversity*, even if only 35% think they know what it actually means. This is a significant finding, and one which cannot be ignored when considering the set-up of any future campaign.

However, the variation amongst Member States is equally significant. Whilst 89% of Austrians are aware of the term, only 15% of Cypriots have heard it before. This doesn't necessarily rule out using the word in an EU-wide campaign, but it gives indications about the **ways and means to communicate biodiversity**. One must not simply take it for granted that a majority of all Member States' populations are accustomed to the term.

The campaign should work across regions with different awareness levels and develop a variety of key messages that could be used. It will mean that, in some countries, greater emphasis will need to be placed on explaining what the word actually means – even while raising awareness of the importance of biodiversity and the detrimental effects of its current loss unless action is taken.

Loss of biodiversity ≠ loss of species

It became evident, both in the expert interviews and in the Flash Eurobarometer, that the general understanding of 'loss of biodiversity' is still very limited.

A majority of 41% of Eurobarometer respondents connect the term to "Certain animals and plants are disappearing/will disappear", and another 20% say it means that "Certain animals and plants are/will become endangered". Only 18% responded with "Decline in natural habitats/less variety – in general", a slightly broader view on the subject.

The loss of biodiversity is thus mainly connected to the loss of specific individual species. A more 'holistic' perspective, as desired by science and policy, is often missing. Even a majority of stakeholders shared the more simplified view. A future EU information campaign will therefore have to explain the importance of biological *diversity* and to focus on the fact that species rarely disappear without affecting their ancestral habitat. The impacts of diminishing biodiversity should be made to feel as tangible as those of climate change.

It has also become apparent that among the general public few respondents (only 2%) perceive the loss of biodiversity as a threat to **ecosystems as providers of goods and services** and thus to their economic well-being. This deficit can become another rather **tangible angle** of a future communications campaign – a fact that has also been emphasised by many expert interview partners.

b. Threats to biodiversity

Main threats are more or less well-known to stakeholders and the general public

The results of our expert interviews and of the Eurobarometer study largely coalesce into three main groups of threats:

The interviewed stakeholders mentioned repeatedly –

1. Climate change
2. Excessive land-use/development (infrastructure, housing, industrial...) resulting in habitat fragmentation
3. Pollution

The general public also placed pollution (27% of respondents listed air and water pollution, another 27% manmade disasters, such as oil spills or industrial accidents) and climate change (19%) top of the list. Intensified agriculture (13%) and land use/development (8%) follow in fourth and fifth position. However, only 2% of respondents thought that invasive alien species are an important threat to biodiversity.

This alignment between ‘expert’ levels and the layman’s beliefs should be **capitalised upon when developing campaign messages**. The European Commission and its partners can build on the beliefs already held by recipients – without undue concern over contradicting views.

c. Cause versus impact

“The target audiences are generally aware of the main threats to biodiversity. The campaign should thus focus more on the impact than on causes.”

As previously mentioned, there is broad agreement and common knowledge about the main causes for biodiversity loss. Therefore, less emphasis should be placed on the threats, so that the future campaign may concentrate on making the problem more tangible by providing examples of the impact of biodiversity loss in the recipients’ daily life.

d. Legal framework and political support

“The European Union has a sufficiently strong policy framework for halting the loss of biodiversity. Emphasis must be put on implementation and public support for necessary measures.”

Most stakeholders agreed that the existing legal framework for the protection of biodiversity and halting its loss is adequate. However, the implementation of existing laws and regulations, in particular at regional and local levels, faces various obstacles. Public authorities face multi-faceted opposition to applying biodiversity-friendly measures. The positive medium- and long-term influence of appropriate decisions is often outweighed by the alleged (economic) short-term implications.

The ignorance among the general public about the economic impact of a diminished biodiversity (see point [a] in this section) supports this attitude and becomes a major factor in planning the future communications campaign. Such misperceptions can only be overcome by the enhanced delivery of information to both stakeholders and the general public, supported by the dissemination of **tangible examples of best practice**.

e. Campaign approach

“Most existing biodiversity campaigns favour a holistic approach to biodiversity loss.”

The initial market research as well as the comprehensive analysis of selected existing biodiversity campaigns clearly demonstrated that an overwhelming majority focussed on integrating the entire spectrum of biodiversity-related issues rather than concentrating on very specific selected species and/or habitats.

This finding is very important for the development of the future EU-led campaign, because it will allow the adaptation and integration of those campaigns into a Europe-wide umbrella initiative. This will have the effect of supporting its implementation and presenting European policy in a **coherent and more uniform** manner.

f. Information sources

“Make use of mass media and involve the educational sector more effectively.”

When it comes to the general public's main sources of information about biodiversity, the Eurobarometer survey revealed some rather interesting results.

i. Rising popularity of the internet as a source of information

Respondents named three main sources of information – television news and documentaries (52%), the internet (42%), and newspapers and magazines (33%). In comparison with the 2004/2005 Special Eurobarometer on 'Attitudes of European citizens towards the environment', the internet has made a remarkable leap forward in term of its impact. Back then, respondents also ranked television highest (72%), but with newspapers (at 51%) coming in second. The internet was at that point only named by 11% of respondents. This represents a significant development in only three years.¹¹

This result clearly demonstrates the importance of placing emphasis – where financially feasible – on television and the internet in order to reach a wider audience.

¹¹ This trend is corroborated in the latest survey on 'Attitudes of European citizens towards the environment' (Special Eurobarometer 295/Wave 68.2)

ii. Schools are insignificant sources – at the moment

Another interesting result was the low ranking of educational institutions as sources of information about biodiversity. Only 5% of respondents named schools or universities.

This may come as a surprise, but it also opens a window of opportunity. As elaborated upon in following chapters, particular attention should be given to young Europeans, who are more receptive and adaptable than older generations. Educational structures should therefore act as more active interlocutors in the Commission's outreach efforts. However, more research is first needed to uncover what young people think about biodiversity, how motivated they are to do something about its loss and what behaviour they would change, before the campaign invests heavily in an educational route.

g. Going local

“A European campaign must provide local examples for biodiversity loss and its causes.”

The general public is largely aware of global causes of biodiversity loss, such as climate change and (industrial) pollution. It is the task of the future Commission-led communications campaign on biodiversity to break these causes down to smaller scale levels and introduce audiences to influential factors in their immediate environment. The Green Spider Network (GSN) could be a useful tool to identify best and worst practice examples, thus allowing the campaign 'to go local'. This obviously must not be seen as a contradiction to making the global link.

6. Strategic campaign principles and objectives

6.1. Strategic principles of an awareness raising campaign

6.1.1. Core message & layering

All successful public information campaigns are built around a **core message** – one which is easy to understand and easy to retain. To ensure that the correct message is chosen, it should be tested on focus groups across Europe. If possible, this message should remain a constant throughout the campaign.

At the same time, supplementary key messages should be devised and used to support this core slogan. They should provide layers which **explain why** the protection of biodiversity is essential for the economic and social well-being of Europe. These messages should be adapted based on the dynamics of the public awareness campaign and the target groups. They should also be able to work across countries with different awareness levels. For example, there would be messages for regions in which biodiversity is well understood, and different messages for regions in which there is little or no knowledge.

Supplementary or explanatory messages should likewise be tested on focus groups before launching them to the target audience.

The success of a campaign rests on picking the correct core slogan and layering with persuasive messages and arguments which adapt according to the dynamics of the campaign and the levels of awareness across Europe.

6.1.2. Corporate identity & branding

Visually, it is crucial that the campaign makes consistent use of a brand. The identity guidelines which form the basis for the campaign's entire 'look' will help ensure a high level of visibility, as well as retention of what these symbols stand for.

"Branding" should, however, extend beyond a simple pictogram. In fact, branding is a *process*. Achieving a high degree of brand awareness among the target audiences is important, but it is not enough. There must also be an emotional commitment attached to it.

In traditional marketing terms, a brand should go through four stages:

1. **know**
2. **think**
3. **feel**
4. **believe**

In the first stage, the key targets become aware of the brand – they **know** what it looks like.

In the second stage, they begin to **think** about the brand, and what it represents (the joint effort to protect biodiversity in Europe and globally). Messages associated with the brand begin to enter into the thought process.

In the third stage, the target audiences **feel** that what the brand represents (halting biodiversity loss) and how this might be useful to them (landscape preservation, supply of food stock, protection of public health, etc.). While this stage may involve an “emotional state”, more needs to be done before there is an emotional commitment on the part of the target group.

In stage four, the target audience has developed an emotional commitment to the brand (protection of biodiversity) and now **believes** that what is being demanded truly will have a positive impact – even if this implies that a price will have to be paid (influence on development projects, individual behaviour, food prices, etc.).

Key to a successful campaign will be the understanding of the dynamics of branding and the use of these principles to build a larger and stronger base of support among stakeholders and the general public.

6.1.3. Advocacy

Before a campaign starts, it is crucial to identify actual and potential advocates. Advocates are the ones who will tend to be one ‘step’ ahead of the general public in terms of awareness and knowledge.

For instance, using the model described above, while most of the population will simply know about the campaign (its brand, the message), the advocate will already be thinking about what the brand represents. More than that, the advocate will articulate this to others to help them reach his ‘stage’.

Furthermore, when people begin to understand what halting the loss of biodiversity actually means, advocates will already have begun to develop an emotional commitment to this ideal. They will help others to reach this stage and to begin to believe (i.e. develop this close emotional tie) that a change in attitude towards biodiversity is indispensable – even if there will be some sacrifices.

Various examples of advocates are presented under point 7.1.3., and include:

- Renowned environmental activists (e.g. Reinhold Messner)
- Entrepreneurs with conscience for global issues (Sir Richard Branson, BASF chairman Jürgen Hambrecht, ...)
- Famous artists (the likes of Peter Gabriel, Bono, Bob Geldof...)

The key to a successful campaign is to identify, nurture and constantly feed information to these advocates.

6.1.4. The third party endorsement

In any campaign, nothing works better than getting someone else to say it for you. Constant positive communication regarding oneself can look like conventional propaganda. Getting someone else to endorse or verify this position adds **credibility**.

The key to credible ‘third party endorsers’ is their independence. This endorsement can come from opinion-formers such as editorial commentators and journalists, policy think tanks, academics, economic or political science researchers, leading business people or celebrities.

Endorsers have real power because they are either **thought leaders** (meaning that people tend to listen to them because they are widely respected in their community) or simply because they have a **constituency** (such as politicians, heads of NGOs, access to networks, etc.) **or both**.

A key to a successful campaign will be to correctly identify possible sources of third party endorsement – and to feed key messages to them. Further, the campaign should then capitalise on the endorsement and make use of creative tools to ‘multiply’ that message, such as via websites, in publications, speeches, media outreach, etc.

6.1.5. The “multiplier” principle

No organisation has the ability or resources to communicate directly with each and every person (other than through massive – hence expensive – advertising). A public awareness campaign, however, implies that the public at large must ultimately be aware and a majority must believe and develop an emotional commitment to the principles of the campaign.

Such a campaign will seek to identify individuals and organisations who can be invaluable “multipliers” of the message (many of the third-party advocates above are also multipliers. The difference is that ‘multipliers’ will go through the mechanics of informing others as well).

Crucial multipliers are trade associations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), public authorities, other institutions and international organisations, student organisations, universities, trade unions, etc. Getting these multipliers on board will mean that they will distribute information to their membership and often be persuasive in obtaining their support as well.

A key to a successful campaign will be to correctly identify and make effective use of key multipliers.

6.1.6. The model of ‘concentric circles’ in a public awareness campaign

This strategic principle simply means that communications should focus primarily on one innermost group in the beginning – and then move outwards until the public at large is finally reached.

Using the model of 'concentric circles' means for instance that this campaign should focus initially on key advocates, multipliers, etc. to ensure their highest level of support. Then the campaign itself can reach out to others (via networks, press outreach, advertising, publications, etc.) as well as facilitate this inner circle acting as a multiplier of the message.

Such an approach is even more feasible considering the campaign's foreseen duration of three years. This timeframe provides sufficient space for a gradual development of the campaign.

Successful campaigns tend to use a model of 'concentric circles' in their strategy.

6.1.7. Response mechanisms (2-way communication with key target audiences)

A public awareness campaign cannot be an entirely one-way communications exercise. There must be a mechanism for target audiences (and this is especially true of those who are opinion-formers and those who will multiply the message) to respond and feel they are contributing to the process.

Such a dialogue may be facilitated via the setting up of Steering Committees or Working Groups, or may be foreseen in the form of interactive tools on the campaign website, etc.

There should be a system to ensure 2-way communication in the public awareness campaign.

6.1.8. Constant research and verification

Research and evaluation in any campaign can never be underestimated. This is particularly true in a campaign where the aim is to mobilise the general public.

The following steps are recommended:

- **Establish an initial benchmark of support** (Flash Eurobarometer on biodiversity; expert interviews with key target groups – to unearth the issues which concern them most);
- **Test messages and tactics to be used in the campaign on focus groups** (which will be representative of the core targets);
- **Conduct quantitative and qualitative surveys at designated intervals** to test support;
- **Find ways to assess and measure the campaign's impact.** The campaign should be more tightly defined in terms of what is meant by the 'engagement of citizens' and how that would be measured. For example, if we get x people to do y, we will save z of biodiversity.
- **Adapt campaign messages and tactics** to support this research.

All successful campaigns have a built-in system of research and verification.

6.2. Campaign targets

The communication campaign defines a clear target of engaging 10 million Europeans actively in biodiversity conservation by 2010 and increasing this number to 15 million by 2013.

This means: **sensitise → inform → guide → act.**

This long term target can only be achieved if three requirements are met:

1. ***Change of attitude in daily life of European general public*** – Biodiversity conservation cannot only be carried out by selected stakeholder groups or policy makers. Citizens from across the Union should be aware of this huge challenge, informed about the impact, and feel empowered to act.
2. ***Improved implementation of European biodiversity policy at national, regional and local level*** – European policy frameworks are just as good as their translation into national law and application on all levels of public administration. Key political decision-makers need to become aware of their influence on sustainable environmental management and have access to practical guidelines for the application of biodiversity-friendly policies.
3. ***Increased exchange of knowledge and best practices amongst stakeholders*** – It is time- and money-consuming, as well as unnecessary, to reinvent the wheel each time. Many stakeholder groups, such as business sectors, public administrations or consumer organisations, can draw lessons from previous experience and best practice in the same field. The European campaign must eventually achieve the highest possible level of exchange within the stakeholder groups, but also between them.

6.3. Campaign Objectives

The overarching objective of the Commission-led campaign in line with the EU Biodiversity Action Plan is to **halt the loss of biodiversity in Europe by 2010 and increase the EU's contribution to the global target of significantly reducing biodiversity loss in the world by 2010.**

The following three general campaign objectives will have to be met if the campaign is to succeed in achieving its overarching objective and above-mentioned targets.

6.3.1. VISIBILITY

The communications campaign aims at enhancing visibility of the importance of biodiversity and the issue of biodiversity loss amongst policy makers, stakeholders, and the wider public. It will furthermore demonstrate the role that both the European Commission and European citizens play in biodiversity conservation.

According to the Flash Eurobarometer about *Attitudes of Europeans towards the issue of biodiversity*¹², 65% of respondents have at least heard of the term **biodiversity** before (despite the complexity of how the term is translated or transposed into any particular language). Although this level of awareness is encouraging, it still lags behind that of the term **climate change**.

The final report of the European Commission Climate Change campaign¹³, implemented in 2006/2007, revealed that at least 95% of respondents in the three sample countries of Ireland, Italy and Poland were aware of climate change and agreed that it was a serious problem.

It must be one of the aims of the biodiversity communication campaign to provide broad visibility for the subject, thus achieving similar levels of awareness and turning the loss of biodiversity into a common everyday problem, of concern for each and every one of us.

“Explain the term”

Such an awareness-raising initiative must go hand in hand with information about, and an explanation of, **biodiversity** and its loss. Recipients must understand the holistic meaning of the term, the interconnection of species, habitats, and human behaviour and the implications of the balance amongst these fragile systems being disturbed or certain elements becoming extinct.

Biodiversity and its loss may have **different meanings/connotations** for different target groups (general public, industry sectors, academia, NGOs, etc.). Whilst there should be no difficulty in adapting messages to these target groups, the campaign ought not to forget the importance of communicating one overarching definition of what biodiversity loss actually represents. In marketing terms, this is known as a “message federaliser”. This approach can therefore be viewed as one of the **added values** of the upcoming European campaign.

The role of individuals

The campaign must not only enhance the visibility of action undertaken at the political, European level. It should also showcase initiatives of individual citizens and thus present tangible examples for small-scale action that each of us can undertake.

This may include initiatives against littering, the illegal import of exotic species or the incorrect use of fertilisers and poison in private gardens – to name but a few.

¹² Flash Eurobarometer 219, 12/2007

¹³ Awareness campaign across EU-25 on Climate Change (N° 070402/2005/421469/MAR/A1)

VISIBILITY – SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- I. **Enhance sensitivity about the loss of biodiversity amongst all target groups, with a special focus on key business & industry sectors** – Awareness-raising can only be achieved by first appealing to the emotions of target audiences. Recipients of the outreach activities must become worried about the state of Europe’s biodiversity before they can become receptive and interested in more detailed information on how biodiversity loss can be halted. Specific focus must be directed at the most relevant business & industry sectors – those who are most affected by or have the highest impact on biodiversity loss.

- II. **Ensure transversal support of European institutions & establish the EU as a driving force of biodiversity protection on the international stage** – Biodiversity loss affects a wide range of policy sectors and thus also a multitude of EU institutions and their respective sub-structures. A successful European campaign will aim to bring all involved actors on board and make sure that the subject is accepted as an important transversal problem. This form of awareness-raising must in a second step cross the boundaries of EU policy making and administration. The European Commission ought to – where it is able to – use its influence and expertise on the international level and thus present the European Union as a **forerunner of biodiversity conservation**.

- III. **Increase coverage about the importance of biodiversity, problems caused by biodiversity loss and respective EU initiatives amongst mass- and specialised media** – Any awareness-raising campaign that targets, amongst others, the general public has to make use of the European media landscape. The limited budget resources make it difficult to derive benefit from the most effective mass media – television – but there is sufficient leeway for the involvement of online and print media.

When it comes to environmental issues, **climate change** is currently the uncontested number one media topic. There is general recognition of the link between climate change and the loss of biodiversity. One in five respondents of the recent Flash Eurobarometer on biodiversity¹⁴ identified climate change as the most important threat to biodiversity. The European Commission should in a first phase capitalise on the climate change momentum as a way of establishing widely the biodiversity campaign.

However, soon after, the media outreach will have to distinguish itself from this global phenomenon and place equal emphasis on the other two most relevant factors for biodiversity loss – **pollution** and **land use**.

The campaign organisers will on the one hand have to inform relevant media representatives about the significance of biodiversity loss (“education”), whilst on the other hand feed them with messages and stories of interest for their respective audiences (“awareness raising”).

¹⁴ Flash Eurobarometer 219: *Attitudes of Europeans towards the issue of biodiversity*

6.3.2. MULTIPLICATION

The communications campaign must aim to identify potential partners, provide them with tailor-made information, and turn them into multipliers as a means of mobilising key audience groups. Securing and capitalising on the power of endorsement will give the message credibility as well as reach/depth.

With 27 Member States, the European Union has reached a dimension that can hardly be covered exclusively by any Commission-led campaign. Outreach of such geographical scope and to so many individuals is simply not feasible with the given financial means. It is also questionable if the European Commission should aim at contacting all target groups directly.

The campaign team should first carry out a detailed **stakeholder analysis** to define target groups. Then potential partners who drive opinion from amongst these distinct groups ought to be identified and subsequently recruited. Once mobilised, these partners ought to be turned into endorsers, capitalising on their credibility and networks.

MULTIPLICATION – SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- I. ***Create Europe-wide momentum for the issue of biodiversity loss*** – Based on the initially achieved enhanced visibility of biodiversity loss as a European problem, the campaign shall make use of a sensitised audience to create a popular movement – a **chain reaction** of spreading the message in concentric circles.

Enhanced dissemination of tailor-made information goes hand in hand with **mobilisation initiatives**, such as competitions or quizzes. The target groups, in particular the general public, need to remain involved with the issue of biodiversity loss.

- II. ***Work with Member State governments to help them capitalise on the EU-led initiative*** – EU Member State governments, represented by their delegates in the Green Spider Network, have committed themselves to supporting the European Commission-led communications campaign on biodiversity loss. Eventually this commitment will need to be transformed into concrete action.

Each of the Member States engages in communications activities about environmental issues of a different kind. The European campaign has to offer support and guidance to national public authorities in order to enable and encourage them to take the EU-led initiative on board. The national ministries' financial and administrative power has invaluable potential to contribute substantially to the campaign aims.

- III. ***Identify potential partners, turn them into advocates and secure their endorsement*** – The concept of 'advocates' was described earlier (see 6.1.3.). Whilst recruiting advocates is an important element in any awareness-raising campaign, it is vital for the future biodiversity campaign.

The topic is unevenly debated amongst the different stakeholder groups and the European Commission has not yet been able to present itself to a broad audience as a key driver of biodiversity conservation. Advocates will act as useful 'tools' for improving this situation. They provide the campaign organisers on the one hand with their reputation, on the other hand with their established networks and existing communications channels.

6.3.3. SUSTAINABILITY

The communications campaign has to provide guidance for concrete action to all target groups, thus ensuring a sustained impact on biodiversity conservation. With a step-by-step approach, the campaign is designed to build on the strengths of each phase. The campaign itself also has to be as 'green' as possible.

Success of the future communications campaign will be achieved if 10 million Europeans are **empowered to take concrete action** in support of biodiversity protection. This demand not only requires an emotional engagement from, and the education of, the focus groups, but ultimately the provision of tangible guidelines that each target audience can follow to become an effective actor.

Following the positive example of numerous initiatives related to climate change, it is therefore recommended to develop, in cooperation with stakeholders and interest groups, **tool-kits, handbooks** and similar practical devices that provide the recipients with hands-on support. Suggestions of such guidelines are presented in chapter 7 on campaign features.

SUSTAINABILITY – SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- I. ***Establish the European Commission's biodiversity channels as the primary source of knowledge amongst all target audiences*** – The scoping study has clearly shown that a multitude of useful information is available, but spread out over so many sources that the coherent view often gets lost and connections remain invisible. This inadequacy must be overcome.

Different target groups have different information needs. While the general public has an interest in the impact of biodiversity loss on food supply and costs, the agricultural sector needs facts about the influence on pollination, and the tourism industry wants to know how a diminished biodiversity will affect the attractiveness of travel destinations. These particularities have to be addressed in the ways and means information is supplied.

The European Commission has a unique chance to establish a single information 'platform' on biodiversity-related issues. This **online-based tool** ought to be open for input by all kinds of users (via a moderated biodiversity Wiki), be they laymen, academics or concerned professionals, and allow for exchange of best practice. This online source must be extremely well developed in order to match expectations of all targeted audiences.

- II. **Empower target audiences to take concrete action** – Experience with preceding campaigns on environmental issues have shown that sustained impact can only be achieved if target audiences are given **concrete guidelines** on how to put information and knowledge into practice and concrete action.

The European Commission should thus, with the support and contribution of expert partners – such as industry associations, school organisations, or NGO platforms/networks – develop a broad spectrum of ‘instruction manuals’ of different kinds and detail. The campaign managers will have to identify the most suitable tools and make them available to all focus groups. What ought to be common to all these tools is the core message surrounding the loss of biodiversity and the European Commission’s role in addressing its decline.

- III. **Encourage Member States to build capacity** – Enabling institutional players and stakeholder groups to become effective partners will require direct and indirect capacity building
- a. direct: implemented by the campaign organisers
 - b. indirect: implemented by secondary partners, such as national public authorities, European stakeholder associations or the NGO sector.

Education and training initiatives have to provide these target groups with adequate information about the impact of biodiversity loss on their specific field of activity and lay the foundation for a change of attitude. Such an ‘educational’ approach can in the first place be initiated by the European Commission, but must – also for financial reasons – subsequently be taken over by various partners in the Member States (see above).

They know best how to approach the relevant stakeholders on their ‘territory’, dispose of the necessary facilities and speak the language of their audiences much better than the Commission ever could.

- IV. **Provide for environmentally-friendly conduct of the campaign** – The future contractor in charge of planning and implementation of the communications campaign has to assure that all aspects undergo (already during the planning phase) thorough assessment concerning their environmental impact.

The contractor should, amongst others, demonstrate

- The environmentally-friendly production and use of materials;
- Sustainable consumption of energy resources;
- Limiting unnecessary travel and/or use of environmentally-friendly means of transport.

7. Campaign features

Chapter 8 will present three models for the future biodiversity communications campaign that differ significantly in their organisational structures, primary target groups, distribution of financial resources and involvement of partners. Each of them has specific merits and drawbacks that have to be assessed by the European Commission before making their ultimate choice of concept.

The consultant has nevertheless identified certain aspects and features that should be taken into consideration regardless of the eventual campaign format.

7.1. Methodological aspects

7.1.1. Address all relevant target groups

Any campaign must bear in mind that long term impact will only be achieved if the key message has been understood by all relevant target groups and led to a change in attitude.

Key target groups

During the course of this scoping study and supported by expert interviews and desk research, Gellis identified the following key target groups:

1. **Local and regional decision-makers**, being the ones with the most direct impact on developments in their area and the consequent impact on biodiversity;
2. Most effected **business sectors** and their representative bodies (forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism);
3. The **general public**, with particular focus on youth and less educated parts of the population. The latter group are the ones who can least easily be reached via an individual approach (need to use mass media).

7.1.2. Promote a catchy way of communicating the terms 'biodiversity' and 'biodiversity loss'

As previously explained, the terminology of 'biodiversity' and 'loss of biodiversity' is not clear to the wider public. This problem has to be addressed, if the communications campaign is to have the desired impact.

Agree on a catchy way of communicating the terms

Article 2 of the CBD provides the following definition for the word biodiversity: "*Biological diversity*" means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems."

Therefore, before a campaign can be developed in detail, the responsible actors – European Commission, contractor, Steering Committee – have to come up with a catchy way of communicating the terms which is easy to understand and will appeal to the public across countries with different levels of awareness. This definition creates the foundation for all subsequent actions.

This study's Interim Report made clear that there is an evident gap between the *holistic*, more academic view on biodiversity and public perception, usually reduced to *loss of species*. The campaign has to establish a **coherent picture** of the European Union's understanding of the issue and subsequently the terminology.

After having explained the holistic content of the term, the campaign could place more emphasis and effort on the small, concrete steps and actions that people can do in order to conserve biodiversity and better understand the holistic approach.

► **Refine key message(s) to target groups**

The campaign strategy will revolve around a **key message** – a motto summarising the holistic meaning of the terms biodiversity and biodiversity loss. This message must briefly express and explain the meaning and intention of the communications campaign.

Gellis' expert team recommends making use of the well-established and appreciated motto of the 2006 Green Week – **Biodiversity is life** – to develop the overall campaign message. This message must circulate around the key testimony:

***Biodiversity is the variety and the basis of life on earth.
Every species depends on another one.
We are all responsible for their conservation and protection.
Protecting biodiversity is essential for our economic and social well-being.***

It is evident that biodiversity has different implications for different audiences. The key message may thus have to be refined to suit the target group and its level of awareness of the issue and achieve the desired impact.

The process of adapting the key message may also be 'outsourced', for example to *Stakeholder Working Groups*, during which representatives of the target audience work with communications experts and the campaign organiser to develop the best possible ways and means for outreach to the respective focus group. However, any modification of the key message must always – for matters of coherence – be approved by the central coordinator.

Gellis recommends the development of a comprehensive **Messaging Architecture**. A messaging architecture is a comprehensive document which is meant to structure and adapt the message of an organisation – or in this case a campaign – to its different target groups. It will align messages to policy imperatives, as defined by DG ENV. Such a document will act as a *vade mecum* for all communication activities in the framework of this campaign and preferably beyond.

7.1.3. Build capacity to support sustained impact of the campaign

Explaining the term 'biodiversity' and its loss is only one aspect of the future communications campaign. In order to achieve sustainable consciousness and change in attitude, the campaign must feature elements of capacity building – of **transferring applicable knowledge** to the target groups.

Biodiversity loss is an even more complex and often less tangible issue than climate change. The diversity of causes, varying implications for different stakeholder groups and thus manifold meanings require tailor-made knowledge transfer.

Depending on the campaign format, the contractor will have to organise limited **direct capacity building**, for example for National Coordinators (in the case of a decentralised structure) or for partners in other Commission DGs (in the case of a more centralised approach).

Indirect capacity building will be achieved via different formats. The website will be one important vehicle, while training guidelines for national authorities may be another option. The future contractor will have to make a well-considered decision on the best applicable tools, based on final campaign format, target groups, and also budget resources.

7.1.4. Focus on multipliers

The European Commission will have to develop a campaign strategy that focuses on identifying, integrating and motivating multipliers of various kinds:

a) Biodiversity advocates

Campaign advocates are public figures with a high reputation among their peer groups who can act as supporters and communication relays for the biodiversity campaign. They must be nurtured by the campaign organisers, fed with relevant and tangible information and deployed at selected initiatives. (Advocates must however be carefully selected, taking into consideration local situations e.g. whether local people know and trust the suggested public figures.)

Examples for such advocates may be

- **Celebrities** with high influence on the general public (actors, musicians, authors, etc.);
- **Business leaders**, addressing their specific sector (CEOs of companies with strong focus on Corporate Social Responsibility or in particular on biodiversity conservation);
- Notable **politicians**, such as former EU Commissioners and ministers, or high ranking public servants with a strong network among public administrations (fmr. MEP and environmental activist Reinhold Messner, fmr. Commissioner for Agriculture Franz Fischler, fmr. German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, etc.)
- Leading **NGO representatives**, providing credibility to the campaign (Nicolas Hulot, Helen Holder/Friends of the Earth Europe, Andreas Baumüller/WWF Europe, etc.).

b) Stakeholder interest groups

Each sector of business & industry is represented on the European level by one or more umbrella organisations. These organisations are logical partners for outreach initiatives to their membership. They have the best knowledge about their sector, credibility amongst their stakeholder circle and established communications channels.

The European Commission is encouraged to identify the most relevant interest groups and establish formal and sustainable partnerships.

Depending on the future campaign structure (see chapter 8) it is recommended to involve stakeholder groups in the planning and subsequently the implementation/dissemination activities. One format could be sectoral **Working Groups** (see 8.III.1. f).

7.1.5. *Involve and closely integrate the Member States in the development and implementation of the communications campaign.*

In its communication **Communicating in partnership**¹⁵, the European Commission emphasises the need for closer cooperation with the Member States (respectively their governments and/or public authorities) when communicating EU-related issues to the general public. Any communications campaign will have to take this requirement into consideration.

It is therefore recommended to establish campaign structures that integrate – where feasible – participation of Member State representatives in planning, implementation, and evaluation aspects. One practical approach is the establishment of **Steering Committees** (see 8.I., 8.II. and 8.III.).

7.1.6. *Motivate and enable the general public to take individual action*

The Europe wide communications campaign on biodiversity has one clearly defined target – the active engagement of 10 million Europeans in biodiversity conservation by 2010. Raising awareness is only a first step towards reaching this target. As with global initiatives on climate change, the biodiversity campaign needs to aim to mobilise more than just selected industries and business sectors to take concrete action. It also needs to engage the general public and ensure that caring for our **biodiversity becomes a permanent element of day-to-day life** (recycling is in many countries a good example of such achievement). The campaign should also plan direct contact with the general public (e.g. via public events at a local level), which are necessary if people are to act in favour of biodiversity.

Best practice examples on the one hand and the results of the Flash Eurobarometer on the other have shown that there is a **need for tangible and practical guidelines** for individual action. Climate change campaigns have already managed to ‘infiltrate’ peoples’ minds in a comparable manner. Europe’s citizens understand that it is important to use energy-saving light bulbs, not to leave electric devices on stand-by mode and to make greater use of public transport. The EU-led biodiversity campaign can become a funnel for existing material and become the number one information platform for the public at large.

¹⁵ COM(2007) 568 final

7.1.7. Support the implementation of the existing policy framework for halting the loss of biodiversity at Member State level.

Interviews with campaign officers and administrators in the Member States' public authorities have indicated that much hope is placed on the **leverage** of a Europe-wide communications campaign which would help in the implementation of the respective European policies at national level.

EU regulations, as well as the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity, have been translated into national law. However, putting the legal framework into effect still depends to a large extent on the political will of national, regional and local law makers and administrations.

A European-wide campaign would give visibility to the subject, enhance awareness amongst the general public and relevant stakeholder groups, and thus facilitate the work of the concerned authorities. It would assist them in their efforts to gain political support and ease their attempt to acquire additional budget resources for the implementation of biodiversity-related initiatives.

Providing practical guidance in form of handbooks/manuals/tool kits will assist motivating institutional players in the Member States to support European efforts.

7.1.8. Establish joint networks of EU institutions and relevant European trade associations to support the implementation of an EU-wide biodiversity policy.

The European Commission has neither the resources nor the necessary network for reaching out to business and industry players at regional and local levels. Small- and medium-sized enterprises as well as the agricultural sector are nevertheless equally important addressees of the EU-led biodiversity communications campaign.

It is therefore vital to **join forces** with influential European umbrella organisations, such as BusinessEurope, UEAPME, COPA-COGECA, Europêche, or the European Construction Forum, to amplify the campaign message(s), gain access to the organisations' membership and information channels, and profit from their credibility amongst the respective stakeholders.

A first attempt at European level to involve and activate the business sector has been made by the European Commission with the **Business & Biodiversity initiative**. A conference in November 2007 in Lisbon gathered business leaders, biodiversity experts, NGOs and policy-makers to explore how European business can improve performance through biodiversity responsibility. The EU-led communications campaign should make use of this already established network.

7.1.9. Reach out to Europe's youth

Expert interviews and experience show that younger generations are the most receptive target audience for environmental concerns. The future campaign needs to take this into consideration, make use of educational structures and new ways of e-communication, and build on the youth's **important role as multipliers** amongst their peers and towards their parent generation. For example, teaching about biodiversity could become part of the campaign via the development of computer games, web-based material on biodiversity etc.

Reaching out to young people is, comparably, an easier task. They are usually organised into networks such as schools, universities, youth clubs and organisations, or accessible via virtual social networks such as Facebook. The future campaign will have to make use of these structures and new social medias and provide suitable communications tools (website features, online competitions, games, etc.) to offer to the competent recipients, such as teachers.

However, as a first step, more research is needed to uncover how young people think about biodiversity, how motivated they are to do something and what behaviour they would change, before the Commission invests heavily in an educational route.

7.2. Campaign tools

Gellis provides a selection of campaign tools that may or should either be used on the central European level, applied by Member State authorities, or – in the case of a decentralised structure – find their way into the Terms of Reference of a call for project proposals.

7.2.1. Corporate Identity guidelines

Corporate Identity (CI) guidelines are a key tool to assure coherent appearance of all campaign elements throughout the entire project period. The rules stipulated in this document are to be respected by any actor that is affiliated with the campaign and makes use of its tools.

CI campaign guidelines consist of two main elements:

➤ **Verbal Identity Guidelines**

The verbal identity of the campaign has to be built around the **Mission Statement** and the **Messaging Architecture**. It refers to the creation of an editorial strategy and tone consistent with the key campaign message. The aim of the verbal identity is to create a unique, recognisable ‘voice’ for the biodiversity campaign that will differentiate it from other initiatives in the sector and also appeal to its target audiences.

The verbal identity guidelines also contain the **campaign slogan**, a short and catchy phrase that expresses the theme, supports the key message and is closely connected to the campaign logo (see below). At this point, it is also important to bear in mind that different Member States have various language particularities; a campaign slogan can work well in one language yet at the same time sound strange in another.

➤ **Visual identity Guidelines**

Visual Identity Guidelines are a tool to ensure that communication activities within the biodiversity campaign are recognisable and coherently branded.

➤ **The logo**

As with products/services advertised in commercials, the biodiversity campaign should be seen as a **brand** that is a unique solution to address the specific needs of its target audience(s). A brand consists of three elements: name, slogan and logo. The **logo** should be just as ‘memorable’ as the slogan, bearing in mind that it should match the main campaign message. Its purpose is to visually project the essence of the Mission Statement. It should therefore be in full accord with the main message.

The visual identity guidelines not only present the logo in detail, but define as well its use in online and print publications, on posters, exhibition stalls or any other visible outreach medium.

➤ Illustrations and photos

Another important aspect of Visual Identity guidelines are the recommendations for the use of illustrations, photos or any other visual elements in campaign tools. These elements often attract the audience's initial attention and set the tone for communications tools. It is thus relevant to explain in detail which kinds of visual elements are to be used and in what way.

7.2.2. Steering Committee

Regardless of whether the future campaign format tends to be more centralised or decentralised, it should be supported by a **European Steering Committee**.

The creation of such a campaign body has several advantages:

- + It integrates important stakeholders into the decision-making structures and thus commits them to the project;
- + It provides the contractor with important advice and insider information;
- + It supports the European Commission in its evaluation tasks and provides valuable quality control.

The set-up of such Steering Committee depends on the future campaign structure (see chapter 8).

7.2.3. Web portal

The campaign website will have a dominant role in the Commission's outreach efforts. Furthermore, it has become evident that online sources have surpassed classical print media as the second most important information source on environmental issues, after television.

It is therefore necessary to create a web platform that unites all requirements and elements of the communications campaign in one single location. It is also important to consider that this online source will have to suit the needs of all target groups – be it the general public, pupils and students, the business community, or NGOs. The developer will have to take this aspect into consideration and provide specific areas for each user group.

Relevant elements of the future web platform may be:

- Awareness-raising (emotional elements and illustrations);
- Targeted information;
- Interactive features to actively engage users and provide space for best practice exchange (databases, upload functions, online forums, extranet, etc.);
- Success stories;
- Guidelines and tool-kits;
- Entertainment (games, quizzes)

These are just a few examples to highlight the complexity of the campaign website.

8. Campaign options

8.1 CAMPAIGN OPTION I – THE DECENTRALISED APPROACH

8.1.1. Strategy

Characteristics:

1. A decentralised umbrella campaign puts the major share of the campaign implementation into the hands of the EU Member States.
2. The European Commission is responsible for the development of the overarching campaign strategy, the supervision of the implementation and the evaluation. The strategy however only defines the key parameters of the project, such as:
 - ▶ Formulation of the policy aims
 - ▶ Identification of target groups
 - ▶ Definition of Corporate Identity, incl. key message(s), slogan and logo
 - ▶ Success factors (positive change in public awareness, development of national biodiversity strategies, increase of public/private funding for biodiversity-related initiatives, etc.)
3. The European Commission, by and large, does *not* engage in any direct communications outreach to the target group(s). This task is assigned to the Member States and selected projects.
4. A lesser proportion of the budget is used for the central coordination tasks. The main portion of financial resources is distributed to projects at Member State level that are in line with the overall campaign strategy.

Implementation:

- a) **Selection of external contractor** – In a first step, the European Commission assigns an external contractor with the management of the multi-annual project.

The tasks of the contractor include:

1. Drafting of **Campaign Strategy & Corporate Identity** guidelines
2. **Selection** of awareness-raising projects at Member State level
 - Development of Terms of Reference
 - Call for proposals
 - Selection of projects
 - Distribution of funds
 - Capacity building/training of project executives
 - Supervision of project implementation
 - Collection and revision of Success Stories
3. **Evaluation and reporting**

- b) Establishment of Steering Committee** – In order to provide strong support amongst national administrations, the Committee is comprised of one representative from each Member State (preferably the Green Spider Network), the contractor’s project manager, and the European Commission’s contract manager. The Steering Committee is put in place to decide on the fundamental aspects of the biodiversity campaign.

Tasks of the Steering Committee:

1. Contribution to draft of **Campaign & Corporate Identity guidelines**
2. **Evaluation** of awareness-raising projects on Member State level
3. Information and contact point at national level

- c) Development of Campaign Strategy and Corporate Identity guidelines** – Based on the EU Biodiversity Action Plan “Building public education, awareness and participation for biodiversity” and the Steering Committee’s general direction, the contractor develops the campaign strategy.
- d) Project selection** – following an EU-wide call for proposals, the European Commission and its contractor choose a limited number of outreach projects. The limited annual budget will make it impossible to choose projects in each Member State. It is therefore recommended to select proposals that cover more than one country or make possible a grouping of EU countries, ensuring a good geographical coverage (e.g. the Baltic States, the Mediterranean States, Eastern Europe, Scandinavia or Central Europe).

Member State governments should also be able to apply for project funding, but the call for proposals should be open to a wider range of stakeholders.

- e) Capacity building** – In order to ensure that all selected projects follow the Campaign Strategy closely and thus contribute to a coherent campaign footprint, the contractor needs to involve project executives in some capacity building and training ahead of starting the implementation.
- f) Supervision of project implementation** – The contractor has to follow the project implementation closely to ensure coherence with the Campaign Strategy. For this purpose, the project managers have to follow a regular reporting mechanism and provide feedback. The European Commission must be willing to intervene if a project doesn’t adhere to the Strategy and possibly even to withdraw financial support.
- g) Collection of reports on critical success factors** – In a decentralised approach, reports about successful project implementations are the only means for the European Commission to demonstrate the achievements of the campaign. It is thus indispensable to collect these success stories, edit them professionally and distribute the message via all available communications channels – in particular of course the website of DG Environment.
- h) Analysis/Evaluation** – Based on country reports, the contractor annually drafts interim evaluations that identify the progress of the communications campaign. These evaluations take into consideration the predefined success factors and can/should be supported by annual Flash Eurobarometer surveys in order to visualise changes in public awareness in the Member States. The Steering Committee discusses the draft reports and jointly decides if and how the campaign strategy may have to be adjusted.

8.1.2. Target Audience(s) and stakeholders

- 1) The campaign strategy provides a rough outline of the key target groups and may delineate a predefined distribution of resources to ensure outreach to a broad spectrum of recipients.
- 2) Target audiences may differ from project to project. This approach allows for the support of initiatives aimed at various groups of recipients, from national stakeholder groups to those at grassroots level, from sectoral industries to the general public.

8.1.3. Messaging

- 1) The overarching message must be defined in the Corporate Identity guidelines. The central contractor is responsible for supervising the implementation of the individual projects and alignment to a European campaign strategy. Project organisers may adapt slightly the key message(s) to their respective audiences, but will need to provide such customisation in their proposal from the outset.
- 2) The European Steering Committee controls on an annual basis the execution of the projects and can recommend interceding if the respective message is inconsistent with the overarching guidelines.

8.1.4. Communication and information activities

The individual projects are in principle free in their choice of methodology. However, it is the responsibility of the European Commission as the funding authority to select proposals with the greatest potential of contributing to the European-wide campaign goals.

8.1.5. Deliverables and Timing

The duration of each individual project is at the discretion of the tenderer. However, the outlining of exit clauses is recommended in case a project does not fulfil expectations or does not adhere to the general guidelines as defined by the European campaign strategy.



Advantages of a decentralised approach

- + Member State governments are likely to **support** such an approach, because it allows for a substantial share of the campaign budget at national level.
- + This 'bottom-up' approach provides a lot of **flexibility**. The projects can easily reflect national priorities, capabilities and national needs.
- + Competition for funding has the potential to provide **high-quality** project proposals.
- + **Cost effectiveness** – Competing applicants have to consider the most efficient implementation to gain public funding.
- + Projects are implemented by stakeholders with **local expertise** in the needs and peculiarities of the respective geographical area. It may be easier in this way to make use of established (national/local/regional) networks and their well-defined target audiences.

- + Implementing organisations may enjoy a higher level of **credibility** than the European Commission and/or are closer to the target audiences. This argument is in particular valid if respected NGOs or institutions are assigned as project partners.
- + **Going local** – a decentralised approach provides for a great potential of reaching target audiences in their ‘natural environment’, hence addressing their immediate needs and concerns.



Disadvantages of a decentralised approach

- The **coordination** of a large number of individual projects is **difficult**. Such complex management tasks will also take up a substantial part of the campaign budget and put into question the cost effectiveness of this approach.
- **Decision-making** in a Steering Committee of around 30 members is inevitably **cumbersome**. However, it is unlikely that the Member States would agree to limit their influence on decision-making structures by reducing this number.
- The central contractor – and thus the Commission – has **no direct influence** on the project implementations. Satisfying results can therefore not be guaranteed.
- Control of the **adherence** to a common Corporate Identity (common logo, slogan, etc.) is difficult. The initiatives may simply be perceived as individual projects and the EU-added value invisible.
- Risk of **little** to no **visibility** and publicity for the European Commission and its work on this issue.

Best practice example:

European Commission Anti-Racism Campaign ‘**For Diversity – Against Discrimination**’
(www.stop-discrimination.info)

8.II CAMPAIGN OPTION II – THE CENTRALISED APPROACH

8.II.1. Strategy

Characteristics:

- 1) A centralised campaign puts all organisational and financial resources in the hand of the European Commission and its campaign organiser.
- 2) The central campaign management is responsible for the development, execution and evaluation of the campaign strategy. The strategy therefore defines all key parameters of the project, such as:
 - ▶ Formulation of the policy aims
 - ▶ Identification of target groups
 - ▶ Development of a **Corporate Identity** for the campaign, covering visual elements, such as logo or campaign website, but also verbal elements, such as slogans, taglines, or key messages
 - ▶ Planning, implementation, supervision and evaluation of concrete actions (events, development and distribution of information material, establishment of stakeholder focus groups, press relations, etc.)
 - ▶ Determination of success factors (positive change in public awareness, development of national biodiversity strategies, increase of public/private funding for biodiversity-related initiatives, etc.)
- 3) Member States' authorities have very limited influence on the campaign and are only involved during the initial planning phase and the evaluation of the campaign.
- 4) The European Commission and its contractor are in charge of all outreach activities, both to the general public and to the stakeholder groups. Member States and other players may make use of the centrally produced communication tools, but may not modify them substantially.
- 5) All financial resources are used for centrally organised initiatives. These may also reach out to Member States, regional or local level, but still remain under the financial and organisational control of the European level.

Implementation:

- a) **Selection of external contractor** – In a first step, the European Commission assigns an external contractor with the management of the multi-annual project.

The tasks of this contractor include:

1. Development of **Campaign Strategy & Corporate Identity** guidelines
2. Development and implementation of **all outreach activities**
3. Collection and dissemination of **success stories**
4. **Networking** with stakeholders
5. **Capacity** building
6. Supervision, evaluation and reporting

- b) Establishment of a Steering Committee** – In order to be operable, the permanent Steering Committee has a maximum of 8-10 members and consists of the contractor's project manager, the contract manager (assigned by the European Commission), selected delegates of the Member State governments (preferably appointed by and chosen from amongst the Green Spider Network) as well as a few representatives of relevant stakeholders (important business sectors, academics, NGOs, etc.).

The Steering Committee is put in place to decide on the fundamental aspects of the biodiversity campaign – the communications plan, the annual review and reporting.

A balanced selection of representatives of Member State governments is crucial in a centrally structured campaign. National administrations and governments have a rather limited influence on the implementation of the campaign. Member State support can thus only be achieved if the choice of delegates reflects a geographical and political balance that manages to represent the main interests of all EU members.

- c) Campaign Strategy Development** – Based on the EU Biodiversity Action Plan “Building public education, awareness and participation for biodiversity” and the Steering Committee's general directions, the contractor develops the Campaign Strategy & Corporate Identity guidelines.
- d) Allocation of financial resources/selection of activities** – The contractor presents a comprehensive plan of all initiatives and actions to be implemented during the project period. This plan can be re-evaluated and adjusted after every project year, but shall in general follow the initially agreed outline.
- e) Implementation of campaign strategy** – The contractor is responsible for the coordination of all actions and initiatives to be implemented during the three-year campaign period. These activities may comprise – not exclusively – centralised information and communication tools (such as website, print publications, toolkits, etc.), press relations, networking with stakeholders, capacity building, exchange of best practice, or events.
- f) Collection of reports on critical success factors** – The anticipated success of this campaign will manifest itself in two ways: Eurobarometer surveys are expected to reveal an increasing awareness of the perils of biodiversity loss amongst Europe's population. This result is however insufficiently tangible to demonstrate the impact of the European Commission's communication efforts.

Campaign impact must be assessed and achievements must therefore be presented in the form of tangible success stories – reports about changes in attitude and behaviour of individuals from amongst the general public as well as of companies or public authorities, to name a few.

It is one of the contractor's most important tasks to collect these success stories, edit them professionally and distribute these positive messages via all available communications channels – in particular, of course, the website of DG Environment.

- g) Analysis/ Evaluation** – The contractor drafts annual progress reports which are discussed with the Steering Committee. The evaluations take into consideration the predefined success factors and can/should be supported by annual Flash Eurobarometer surveys in order to visualise changes in public awareness in the Member States. The campaign strategy may be adjusted in order to improve the set targets.

8.II.2. Target audience(s) and stakeholders

- 1) The campaign strategy provides a comprehensive definition of the target audiences, the respective approach and outreach activities. This includes both the general public and selected stakeholder groups (see chapter 8.II.4. below).
- 2) Target audiences may of course differ depending on the respective activity. The campaign will have to address as many relevant groups of society as possible. Besides the general public and youth, this entails amongst others
 - Selected business and industry sectors;
 - NGOs
 - Research & academia
 - Media

8.II.3. Messaging

- 1) All audiences must have the same understanding of what is being promoted. The campaign strategy therefore defines the key message of the project and develops refined sub-messages that are appropriate for the respective activities and stakeholder groups.
- 2) The Steering Committee is involved in developing the campaign strategy and thus the initial phase of the message definition. Adaptations during the project cycle are predominantly executed by the central campaign management, but the Steering Committee may contribute during the course of the annual campaign revision meetings.

8.II.4. Communication and information activities

- 1) To achieve the highest possible impact, the biodiversity campaign must address both the general public and selected stakeholder groups. However, the limited financial resources will require the adoption of a model of '**concentric circles**', whereby the chosen outreach activities can be amplified and redistributed via multipliers of different kinds:
 - ▶ **General public**
 - Development of uniform communications tools, such as campaign website, stickers, posters, brochures and more innovative eco-friendly promotional material and e-communication
 - Distribution via the European campaign manager (external contractor) to national, regional and local authorities, who are asked to forward the material to individual recipients.
 - Personal outreach via a few larger scale public events
 - ▶ **Stakeholder outreach**
 - Approach of European-level umbrella organisations and initiatives (BusinessEurope, COPA-COGECA, Europêche, Countdown 2010...);
 - Identification and development of key public 'advocates' to ensure that the messages radiate out from within their specific 'circle' of influence
 - Establishment of Working Groups to discuss best possible outreach to their membership;

- Creation of targeted information material, guidelines, or tool-kits and distribution via umbrella organisations' communication lines and the campaign website.
- 2) The campaign website becomes the **main communications tool**.
 - All information, both for the general public and the stakeholder groups will be accessible at this single online source.
 - The website will feature numerous possibilities for **information gathering** (download areas, links, best practice articles, success stories), **entertainment** (online quiz, competitions, etc.) or **personal interaction** (stakeholder forums, chat rooms, petition, etc.)
 - 3) Integrating **television** as the most effective mass media shall – where financially feasible – become an integral part of the campaign.
 - The campaign should foresee the production of a certain number of TV ads for use all over Europe. To overcome the language barrier, the ad should focus on visual aspects, a few key messages and promoting the link to the campaign website.
 - Broadcasting in all 27 Member States is the most costly aspect of using TV ads. The campaign should thus focus on securing contributions from Member State governments and/or private sponsors for this exercise.

8.II.5. Deliverables and Timing

- 1) As mentioned before, the activities and their scheduling will be meticulously defined in the campaign strategy to assure responsible allocation of financial and personnel resources. Adjustments will mainly be foreseen following the annual review mechanisms.



Advantages of a centralised approach

- + **Decision-making** and implementation are facilitated by the small project team, and all aspects of the campaign are defined centrally and clearly outlined in the campaign strategy.
- + **Member State** authorities can be **bypassed** and cooperation directly established with civil society and other stakeholders at national level. This aspect facilitates the campaign administration, but obviously requires endorsement and support from the Member States, represented by their delegates in the Steering Committee.
- + The communication tools and activities are very **accessible**, because they are presented in 'one hand'. An interested audience can find information about the entire campaign on one central website, contact one single campaign office and will thus have a very coherent impression of the initiative.
- + A centralised approach establishes '**economies of scale**' and is therefore likely to be cost effective. All communications tools are developed and produced centrally for a very large audience.
- + The '**Big Bang-effect**' of certain centralised communications activities has potential for high visibility and is thus attractive for private donors, such as multinational companies.

- + Absolute **coherence** in the campaign presentation. All outreach activities are centrally coordinated, are based on the same visual and verbal guidelines, and make use of the same set of pre-defined messages.
- + High **visibility** and publicity for the European Commission and its work on this issue.



Disadvantages of a centralised approach

- Member States' involvement is restricted to the Steering Committee and thus bears the danger of lacking support and motivation within the public administrations. This would obviously **contradict** the European Commission's current strategy for '**Communicating Europe in Partnership**'.
- Centralised campaigns often have a high **one time impact** ('shock wave' after launch), but fail to achieve a medium- and long-term effect, particularly at regional and local level. Such strategies are usually applied for **FMCG** (Fast-moving consumer goods), but may be insufficient for achieving sustainable attitude change.
- Initial research, expert interviews and the Flash Eurobarometer have all shown that different target audiences have a very different understanding of the term 'biodiversity', the meaning of its loss and the implications. These differences can be seen between both various groups of society and geographic regions.

The capability of a centralised campaign for **adaptations and customisations** to the needs of these specific audiences is very limited. Outreach activities might thus be stuck at the European or – in the best case scenario – national level, but may not reach the ultimate target – the individual recipient.

- The limited budget resources can easily become an obstacle for penetrating not just the European and maybe national level, but also reaching out to regional and local audiences. A centralised approach would thus require financial contributions from **external partners**, like the corporate sector or NGOs. Such support cannot be guaranteed and represents an unpredictable factor for success.
- The centralised system of concentric circles, building on the support of advocates and multipliers, relies on a thorough selection and activation of **stakeholder groups**. They are the main catalyser for the campaign message and thus need to have the administrative capabilities to support the campaign.

Best-practice example:

UK biodiversity campaign **Natural England** (www.naturalengland.org.uk)

8.III CAMPAIGN OPTION III – THE SEMI-CENTRALISED APPROACH

8.III.1. Strategy

Characteristics:

- 1) A semi-centralised campaign structure joins elements of the centralised and the decentralised approach:
 - a) The development of the Campaign Strategy, the creation of the Corporate Identity guidelines and the implementation of certain Europe-wide communication actions is assigned to the central campaign management.
 - b) The larger section of activities at national, but also regional and local, level is dealt with by Member State and/or regional and local authorities.
- 2) The ‘**shared implementation**’ concept is based on the campaign strategy, which is developed jointly by the European Commission (and its contractor) and Member State representatives.
- 3) The distribution of financial resources remains at the European level, but limited budget shares may be used to contribute to implementation at Member State level.
- 4) The implementation at Member State level is founded on customised country plans. These plans are to be developed by dedicated Working Groups (see Implementation below).

Implementation:

- a) **Selection of external contractor** – In a first step, the European Commission assigns an external contractor with the management of the multi-annual project.

The tasks of this contractor include:

1. Development of Campaign Strategy & Corporate Identity Guidelines
 2. Implementation of centralised ‘European’ outreach activities
 3. Collection and dissemination of success stories
 4. Networking with stakeholders
 5. Capacity building at European level
 6. Supervision of implementation at Member State level with the help of national coordinators (own network or appointed)
 7. Evaluation and reporting
- b) **Establishment of Steering Committee** – To be operational, the permanent Steering Committee has a maximum of 8-10 members and consists of the contractor’s **project manager**, the **contract manager** (assigned by the European Commission) and **representatives of the Member States** (preferably appointed by and chosen from amongst the *Green Spider Network*).

The Steering Committee is put in place to

- Participate in drafting the campaign strategy
- Contribution to development of corporate identity guidelines
- Approval of implementation initiatives at Member State level
- Annual evaluation of campaign and recommendations for adaptation

c) **Campaign Strategy Development** – Based on the EU Biodiversity Action Plan “Building public education, awareness and participation for biodiversity” and the Steering Committee’s general directions, the contractor develops the Campaign Strategy & Corporate Identity guidelines.

- ▶ Formulation of the policy aims
- ▶ Identification of target groups
- ▶ Development of a **Corporate Identity** for the campaign, covering visual elements, such as logo or campaign website, but also verbal elements, such as slogans, taglines, or key messages.
- ▶ Planning, implementation, supervision and evaluation of selected actions of pan-European character (events, development and distribution of information material, establishment of stakeholder focus groups, press relations, etc.)
- ▶ Definition of scope for national actions. This definition provides the framework for activities at Member States level. The concrete planning is left to each country’s public authorities.
- ▶ Determination of success factors (positive change in public awareness, development of national biodiversity strategies, increase of public/private funding for biodiversity-related initiatives, etc.)

d) **Appointment of National Coordinators** – The shared implementation between European and national levels requires the appointment of National Coordinators for each Member State. These campaign executives:

- Act as the **relay** between the central campaign management and the implementing authorities on Member States level;
- Are responsible for **adherence** to the campaign strategy & Corporate Identity guidelines in their respective country;
- Work as an **information point** for potential partners and other stakeholders within their respective Member State;
- Provide regular **reporting** and evaluation to the central coordinators.

e) **Allocation of financial resources/ Selection of activities** – The contractor provides a comprehensive plan for all centralised initiatives and actions to be implemented during the project period. This plan can be re-evaluated and adjusted after every project year, but shall in general follow the initially agreed outline.

Depending on available budget resources, the Steering Committee may also decide to allocate limited finances for the support of initiatives on Member State level.

f) **Establishment of Stakeholder Working Groups** – Different groups of society have varying stakes in the loss of biodiversity. To address this circumstance and adjust the campaign’s approach and message to the needs of the individual stakeholders, the installation of joint Working Groups is recommended.

Outreach to relevant stakeholders

The campaign shall aim to establish one Working Group for each focus stakeholder group. These include the most relevant business sectors (construction, fisheries, tourism, or forestry), but may also be set up for the educational sector or specialised media.

Set-up

Each Working Group consists of delegates of the most representative (European) umbrella organisations, the European Commission and its campaign managers, at least one representative of the Member States (preferably selected by and from within the Green Spider Network), and – where required – specific experts.

Tasks

1. Identification of the specific interests and needs of the respective stakeholders in relation to biodiversity;
 2. Definition of adequate messages and outreach channels;
 3. Development of communication and information tools, such as tool-kits and guidelines;
 4. Establishment of **country plans** for each Member State, taking into account the individual countries' specific needs, and deciding on the most feasible way of disseminating information.
- g) **Capacity building** – In order to ensure that all campaign activities, both centralised and decentralised, follow the Campaign Strategy closely and thus provide a coherent impression, the contractor needs to provide limited capacity building and training sessions for national coordinators and heads of the working groups.
- h) **Collection of reports on critical success factors** – Please refer to chapter 8.II.1 f for a description of this assignment.
- i) **Analysis/ Evaluation** – The Member States are required to deliver annual progress reports which are integrated by the European campaign manager into the general interim report. Based on this report, the Steering Committee discusses and evaluates the campaign results. Taking into consideration the predefined success factors and supported by an annual Flash Eurobarometer surveys, the Committee decides if and how the campaign strategy needs to be adjusted in order to improve the rate of success of the set targets.

8.III.2. Target audience(s) and stakeholders

- 1) The campaign strategy provides a comprehensive definition of the addressed target audiences, the respective approach and the centralised outreach activities. This includes both the general public and selected stakeholder groups.
- 2) Target audiences may of course differ depending on the respective activity. The campaign will have to address as many relevant groups in society as possible. Besides the general public and, in particular, youth, this entails amongst others:
 - Selected business and industry sectors;
 - NGOs
 - Research & academia
 - Media

- 3) The Member States decide individually which of the key target groups – identified in the campaign strategy – they want to focus on. National data as well as the latest Flash Eurobarometer on biodiversity should provide sufficient background information for these strategic decisions.

Any outreach activities at Member State level should preferably be based on the country plans, developed by the individual Working Groups.

8.III.3. Messaging

- 1) All audiences must have the same understanding of what is being promoted. The campaign strategy defines the key message of the project, while the refinement for activities aimed at selected stakeholder groups takes place in the meetings of the sectoral Working Groups.
- 2) The European Steering Committee is involved in the development of the campaign strategy and thus in the initial phase of message definition. Adaptations during the project cycle are predominantly executed by the central campaign management, but the Steering Committee may contribute during the course of the annual campaign revision meetings.

8.III.4. Communication and information activities

- 1) In order to achieve the highest possible impact, the biodiversity communications campaign needs to address both the general public and the selected stakeholder groups. However, the limited financial resources will require adoption of a model of '**concentric circles**', whereby the chosen outreach activities aim at being amplified and redistributed via multipliers of different kinds:

▶ **General public**

- Development of uniform communications tools, such as campaign website, stickers, posters, brochures and more innovative eco-friendly promotional material and e-communication
- Distribution via the European campaign manager (external contractor) to national authorities, which are assigned with redistributing tasked with forwarding the material to individual recipients.
- Direct outreach via a few larger scale public events and initiatives that are developed at Member State level.

▶ **Stakeholder outreach**

- Approach of European-level umbrella organisations and initiatives (BusinessEurope, COPA-COGECA, Europêche, Countdown 2010...);
- Identification and development of key public 'advocates' to ensure that the messages radiate out from within their specific 'circle' of influence
- Establishment of Working Groups to discuss best possible outreach to their membership;
- Creation of targeted information material, guidelines, or tool-kits and distribution via umbrella organisations' communication lines, but also via the campaign website and the Member States authorities.

- 2) The campaign website becomes the **main integral communications tool**.
- All information, for both the general public and the stakeholder groups will be accessible at this single online source.
 - The website will feature numerous possibilities for **information gathering** (download areas, links, best practice articles, success stories), **entertainment** (online quiz, competitions, etc.) or **personal interaction** (stakeholder forums, chat rooms, petition, etc.)
- 3) Integrating **television** as the most effective mass media will, where financially feasible, be an integral part of the campaign.
- The campaign should foresee the production of a certain number of TV ads for use all over Europe. To overcome the language barrier, the ad should focus on visual aspects, a few key messages and promoting the link to the campaign website.
 - Broadcasting in all 27 Member States is the most costly aspect of using TV ads. The campaign should thus focus on securing contributions from Member State governments and/or private sponsors for this exercise.

8.II.5. Deliverables and Timing

All centralised activities and their scheduling will be defined in the overarching campaign strategy. The Member States – represented by the National Coordinators – are encouraged to provide **annual implementation plans**, lining out the concrete actions and time tables.



Advantages of a semi-centralised approach

- + Most **inclusive approach**, involving the European institutions, stakeholder groups at European, national and regional levels, as well as Member State public authorities. The campaign will be supported by the broadest possible group of players.

Control over planning and implementation remains nevertheless largely at European level.

- + **Member State** authorities are **involved** in various aspects of planning and implementation. Most importantly, they are encouraged to adjust their national information programmes to the campaign aims and guidelines, thus contributing to the success of the Europe-wide campaign, financially as well as practically.
- + The campaign structure integrates both the short-term 'Big Bang' effect of centralised activities and the long-term, more sustained impact of localised action.
- + **Decision-making** and implementation are facilitated by a small project team (supported by the Steering Committee) and the clear distinction of responsibilities for the implementation of the campaign between European and Member State levels. Duplications or insufficient information flow should thus be avoided.

- + The centralised communication tools and activities are very **accessible**, because they are presented in 'one hand'. The 'shared implication' model allows for the development of **customised tools** that fit either a specific country or stakeholder group. Any interested audience will be able to find information in the most appropriate format.
- + Strong **coherence** in the campaign presentation. All outreach activities are based on the same visual and verbal guidelines, and make use of the same set of pre-defined messages. All adaptations have to be approved either by the steering Committee (for the overarching campaign message), by the working Groups (for messaging to specific stakeholder groups) or by the Member States (for outreach at national level).
- + High **visibility** and publicity both for the European Commission and the Member States.



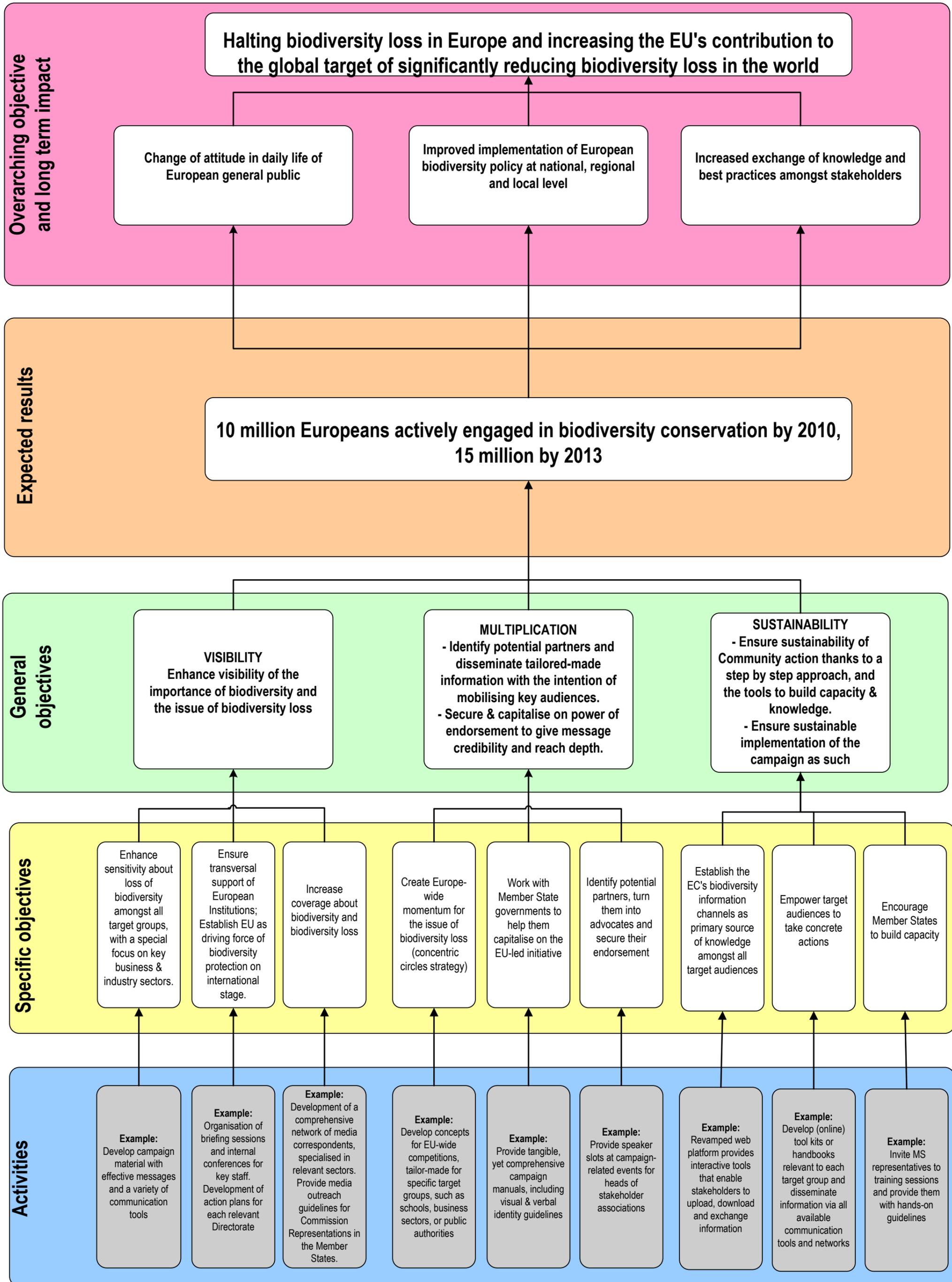
Disadvantages of a semi-centralised approach

- Shared competences demand a high level of **commitment** from both sides. A lack of information flow or insufficient support from certain national authorities will diminish the impact in the respective Member State.
- Project management and reporting at the European level becomes **more complicated and time-consuming** than with a purely centralised approach. The central campaign management needs to keep in very close connection with both the Member States' National Coordinators and the stakeholder Working Groups to avoid letting the control slip out of the Commission's hands.
- Diversifying a campaign always bears a certain risk of **losing coherence** in messaging and appearance. Close supervision of all activities, including those executed at Member State level is obligatory.
- The campaign impact at Member State level is highly dependent on the **commitment of national** (regional, local) **partners**.
- Financial contribution of Member States' governments and other partners can't be guaranteed, but **co-financing** is absolutely essential to achieve the desired results.

Best practice example:

Malta Environment & Planning Authority (MEPA) – *We live in a beautiful land, don't we?*

OBJECTIVE TREE



		Decentralised Approach	Semi-centralised Approach	Centralised Approach
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Only the key elements of the campaign strategy are defined at EC and MS level ▶ The implementation is done at local level: no direct communication outreach to the target groups at European level ▶ The financial resources are used to support selected projects at Member State level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The entire campaign strategy and Corporate identity guidelines are developed at European level ▶ The implementation is shared between the European and Member State levels ▶ The implementation at Member State level is founded on customised country plans established by stakeholder Working Groups ▶ The financial resources remain at European level but can be used to contribute to implementation at MS level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The entire campaign strategy and Corporate identity guidelines are developed at European level ▶ The implementation is centrally organised at European level. ▶ Member States' authorities have only limited influence in the planning and evaluation of the campaign. ▶ All financial resources remain with the European level 	
Tasks of central contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops the key elements of the campaign strategy • Drafts the Corporate Identity Guidelines of the campaign • Develops the Terms of Reference for projects • Selects local projects and distributes the funds • Organises training and capacity building activities for project executives • Supervises the project implementation • Collects, revises and disseminates reports on success factors • Is in charge of evaluation and has oversight on reporting activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops the campaign strategy • Develops the Corporate Identity Guidelines of the campaign • Organises training and capacity building activities for national coordinators and heads of working groups • Supervises the implementation at MS level with the help of national coordinators • Implements centralised 'European' outreach activities • Networks with stakeholders • Collects, revises and disseminates reports on success factors • Is in charge of evaluation and has oversight on reporting activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops the campaign strategy • Develops the Corporate Identity Guidelines of the campaign • Organises training and capacity building activities for multipliers (stakeholder organisations, national public administrations) • Supervises the implementation of all activities • Develops and implements all outreach activities • Networks with stakeholders • Collects, revises and disseminates reports on success factors • Is in charge of all evaluation and reporting activities 	
Structure and tasks of Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is composed of one representative per Member State government & contract manager (EC) & project manager (contractor) • Contributes to the drafting of the Campaign strategy • Contributes to the drafting of the Corporate Identity Guidelines • Conducts evaluations of projects' activities • Decides jointly on campaign adjustments after interim evaluations • Acts as information and contact point on national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is composed of 8 to 10 members chosen amongst the Green Spider network & selected stakeholders • Contributes to the drafting of the Campaign strategy • Contributes to the drafting of the Corporate Identity Guidelines • Approves the implementation initiatives at MS-level • Conducts annual evaluation of campaign progress • Decides on campaign adjustments after interim evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is composed of 8 to 10 members chosen amongst the Green Spider network & selected stakeholders • Contributes to the drafting of the Campaign strategy • Contributes to the drafting of the Corporate Identity Guidelines • Conducts annual evaluation of campaign progress • Decides on campaign adjustments after interim evaluations 	
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Likely to gather support and enthusiasm from MS + Flexibility: highly adaptable to local needs and capacities + Likely to attract high quality projects due to the competitive selection procedure + Cost effective – the applicants have to consider the most efficient implementation to gain public funding + Optimal use of local expertise and established networks + Higher credibility thanks to local implementing organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Very inclusive approach ensuring the support by the broadest possible group of players + Member State authorities are involved in various aspects of planning and implementation and invited to adjust their national programmes to campaign aims and guidelines → Co-financing of campaign via MS budgets + Decision making and implementation are facilitated by the small size of the project team and the clear distinction of responsibilities between EU level and MS + Very accessible centralised communication tools and activities complemented with customised tools developed thanks to the 'shared implication' process + Strong coherence in the campaign presentation + High visibility and publicity of both EC and MS + Campaign integrates short-term 'Big Bang' effect of centralised activities and long-term impact of localised action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Easy campaign management + Member States' authorities can be bypassed and cooperation directly established with civil society and other stakeholders on national level → facilitated administration + A centralised approach establishes 'economies of scale' and thus tends to be more cost effective + Decision making and implementation are facilitated by the small size of the project team and the clear distinction of responsibilities between EU and MS levels + Very accessible centralised communication tools + Big bang-effect and thus high visibility is attractive for private donors (multinational companies) + Absolute coherence of the campaign presentation + High visibility and publicity of both EC and MS 	

	Decentralised Approach	Semi-centralised Approach	Centralised Approach
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complex campaign management - Ponderous decision-making process due to large steering committee - No direct influence for the central contractor (and thus the EC) - Results can not be guaranteed - Low cost effectiveness due to the high level of resources needed for administration, governance, capacity building, etc. - Control of adherence to Corporate Identity guidelines is made difficult - Tendency towards low visibility and publicity for the EC's work on this issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demands high level of commitment from both sides - Project management and reporting on EU level are complicated and time consuming - Bears a certain risk of losing coherence in messaging and appearance - Impact on MS-level highly dependent on commitment of national (regional, local) partners. - Financial contribution of Member States' governments and other partners can not be guaranteed, but co-financing is absolutely essential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The low level of involvement of the MS can contradict the EC's 'Communicating Europe in Partnership strategy' - High one time impact (shock wave after launch), but achieving medium- and long-term effect on local level is difficult → typical strategy for FMCG (Fast moving consumer goods) - Does not allow adaptations and customisations - Penetration of regional and local level only feasible with (financial) support from external partners - Such approach mainly provides information, but doesn't educate - Selection of stakeholder groups very important → they are the main catalysers and multipliers and thus need to have the administrative capabilities to support the campaign
Examples	European Commission Anti-Racism Campaign 'For Diversity – Against Discrimination'	Malta Environment & Planning Authority (MEPA) – <i>We live in a beautiful land, don't we?</i>	UK biodiversity campaign <i>Natural England</i>