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APPENDIX
to the
OPINION
of the
Committee of the Regions
on the
Communication from the Commission
Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 — and beyond
Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being
COM(2006) 216 final

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This appendix was drawn up by the rapporteur on his sole responsibility. It is available in English only.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE ON BIODIVERSITY PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

1. To safeguard the EU's most important habitats and species

1.1 Sweden: Jämtland County – Safeguarding orchids by long-term local action

The county of Jämtland has several rare species of orchids within its territory. For many years we have had special programs to protect them. One of the projects, led by WWF and the regional County Administration, focused on an orchid with the Swedish name Brunkulla (lat. *Nigritella nigra*). The flower is also a regional symbol of Jämtland.

In the seventies it became apparent that this flower was under serious threat and in 1977 WWF, a local NGO and the county joined forces to launch a project, aimed at safeguarding the Brunkulla. In 2005 the project was successfully concluded.

Different methods were used. First, an inventory was put together. A lot of research was carried out in order to understand what kind of biological conditions the flower needed. Landowners and local NGOs were involved in order to reach out to people and make them take responsibility for guarding and maintaining the sites in accordance with special plans and programs developed for the sites. It was formally agreed that one landowner, or one local NGO, would take the lead at each specific site.

Now, 30 years later, the Brunkulla has been saved. This initiative is a good example of how this kind of work can be done locally. It also highlights the importance of carrying out a project over a long period and getting local people and small NGOs involved, along with the experts and scientists.

1.2 United Kingdom: East Midlands – Counting down for Butterflies and Moths

This project forms part of the Countdown 2010 project "Conserving Butterflies and Moths at a landscape level in the Midlands and the East of England" and one major focus is on the Nottingham/Derbyshire coalfields area. In this area the local community is undergoing major regeneration following the closure of most coalmines. Some of the region's most threatened butterflies have adapted to live on the resulting brownfield sites and it is important that, when these large land areas are restored, suitable wildlife habitats are incorporated in what are becoming valuable recreational resources in a generally urbanised area.

To make this happen the project covers:

- training on survey work, habitat assessment and monitoring techniques for the key brownfield butterfly species;

- advising landowners and restorers on habitat management and creation for key species and assisting with the preparation of habitat management plans, including creating demonstration site(s) for habitat management experimentation;
- promoting good practice through newsletters, articles and a National Conference in 2007;
- publicising the wildlife value of brownfield sites to the local communities.

1.3 **Greece: Crete - Conservation Measures for the Palm Forest of Vai**

The palm forest of Vai in Greece is considered a priority habitat type by EU Directive 92/43/EEC. The Phoenix theophrasti palm, an endemic species in the Eastern Mediterranean, is listed in Annex II of the same directive. It is the only natural palm forest in Europe, and possibly the only forest of Phoenix theophrasti in the world.

Unfortunately, the Vai palm forest suffered from its own popularity; there was substantial pressure from tourism which threatened its preservation. In addition, the surface area of the Vai palm forest had shrunk due to clearing of land for cultivation. Any natural expansion was blocked by the agricultural use of the surrounding land. The Municipality of Itanos, the Forest Directorate of Lassithi and the Holy Monastery of Toplou (landowner) set up a project with the overall objective of conserving the aesthetic forest of Vai by expanding the palm groves and by alleviating the threats to the site. The specific objectives of the project were:

- to improve the structure and vigour of the existing palm forest, which had suffered from continuous degradation;
- to expand the distribution area of the palm forest into an area that was previously occupied by palms;
- to integrate the biodiversity protection and sustainable use objectives into other sectors (e.g. tourism, forestry, physical planning).

2. **To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU countryside**

2.1 **LIFESCAPE – Drawing economic benefits out of Europe's landscapes and biodiversity**

The interregional project LIFESCAPE - YOUR LANDSCAPE, which was launched in 2005, aims to test and describe a viable strategy for sustainable rural development that can be applied throughout North West Europe. The Province of Noord-Brabant in the Netherlands is responsible for leading the project which involves fourteen partners, five nationalities, and twenty trans-national activities aimed at sharing experiences and working together on one project. The LIFESCAPE project is funded out of the EU's INTERREG IIIB Programme for North West Europe.

LIFESCAPE combines the two areas "livelihood" and "landscape", representing individual benefits and the common good - into one concept. The LIFESCAPE approach is about using

our landscape to bring people together so as to create added value and quality of life. Each trans-national action provides an opportunity to explore the LIFESCAPE challenge under different circumstances. Acknowledging the landscape as a source of identity and inspiration can bring people together from different sectors who then join forces to preserve and enhance the quality of the landscape.

Concrete activities include:

- setting up branding processes for products which are produced in connection with the protection of landscapes and their biodiversity. Consumers' awareness of the surrounding landscape is also raised through these activities, and the local economy benefits through the development of market share;
- school projects in which children experience the landscape and the influence human decisions have on it;
- organisation of stakeholder involvement in planning decisions;
- developing schemes in which the provision of environmental and ecosystem services is economically worthwhile.

2.2 **United Kingdom: East Midlands Nottinghamshire Conservation Grazing Project**

The Conservation Grazing project aims to restore a variety of nationally important grassland and heathland habitats and bring them under long-term sustainable management. This will be achieved by introducing Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's flock of Hebridean sheep and English Longhorn cattle to a wide range of sites bringing them under optimal management to benefit wildlife. This project will make a significant contribution to the aims of the UK and County Biodiversity Action Plans and:

- bring 80% of the county's heathland into appropriate management and increase the area of heathland by at least 200 ha;
- secure favourable management of all sites of special scientific interest where unimproved neutral grassland is a qualifying feature;
- allow no further loss of unimproved neutral grassland in the county;
- ensure that wet grasslands of conservation interest are given necessary protection and are appropriately managed;
- allow no further loss of lowland acid grassland and secure favourable management of 30% of (acid grassland) by 2005 and 100% by 2015;
- allow no further loss of unimproved calcareous grassland in the county and bring 30% of the County's calcareous grassland into appropriate management by 2005, and as near to 100% by 2015.

2.3 **Spain: Andalusia Doñana 2005 - Hydro-ecological restoration project**

The Doñana 2005 project being set up by the Spanish Ministry of the Environment in Andalusia and coordinated by the Andalusian Water Agency (environmental department of the Council of Andalusia) aims to restore and regenerate the marshland's complex water system, allowing the area to develop as naturally and freely as possible. The goal is to maintain the biodiversity of the Doñana marshland, one of Europe's most emblematic natural areas.

In order to conserve the environment and its biodiversity successfully, and as naturally as possible, an action plan has been set up. The plan includes eight hydraulic engineering projects, and provides for their monitoring before, during and after implementation, along with over twenty relevant research programmes.

The restoration strategy gives equal emphasis to the initiatives to be undertaken and their monitoring, and a cross-disciplinary, integrated wetland strategy has therefore been adopted. A scientific board has been set up to study and review all the engineering works in compliance with the biological requirements specific to each area and in accordance with the end goal.

Emphasis is also given to improving scientific knowledge prior to the decision-making stage, with more than twenty research projects being funded. Many of these will provide short- and medium-term decision support, while others are more scientific in nature, making it possible for the first time to study such atrophied ecosystems and their return to a natural state.

3. **To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU marine environment**

3.1 **Greece: Thessaloniki - Restoration and conservation of the Coastal Lagoon of Kalohori**

The coastal lagoon of Kalohori (Thessaloniki) is well-known internationally for its scientific, educational and recreational value, its unique hydrological features (e.g. water depth), the diversity of its habitats within a relatively confined area, and as a hunting ground.

The restoration efforts, carried out by the Organisation for the Master Plan Implementation and Environmental Protection of Thessaloniki, the Municipality of Echedoros and the Development Agency of Thessaloniki, focused on improving the habitat status and developing new appropriate habitats. This included studies and projects aimed at improving the downgraded soil and water recourses in the study area. The projects consisted of:

- the construction of artificial wetlands (e.g. for the cleaning of waters so that they can be re-used for irrigation purposes);
- the development of protective zones, comprising special plantations;

- the sustainable management of the wetland waters.

3.2 **Poland: Oder Delta and Szczecin lagoon**

The Oder Delta and Szczecin lagoon, situated in Poland and Germany constitute one of Europe's largest natural coastal and marine environments. The lagoon is surrounded by wetlands and small villages in an agrarian landscape with a very rich flora and fauna. It is one of the most important areas for migrating birds in the southern Baltic and it has the highest density of sea eagle (white-tailed eagle) in Europe, with 150 breeding pairs. It also hosts wild boar, fox, otter and beaver. The Wolin National Park is located in the north-eastern part of the delta.

After 1990 the area values and its traditional rural management were threatened by the collapse of the agricultural system, land abandonment, waste dumping and plans for harbour extension. The local population, municipalities and voivodship were concerned about these developments and sought more sustainable development of the region as proposed by EUCC – The Coastal Union in 1995. The EUCC and its national branch (EUCC-Poland) agreed with local and regional authorities on a development strategy based upon nature conservation, low impact agriculture involving the local population, recreation and tourism targeting western European visitors and ecotourists. EUCC and EUCC-Poland invested more than EUR 1 million to protect, upgrade and restore a number of wetlands and islands in the lagoon.

On 7 October 2005 the Oder Delta Nature Park was officially opened. This 4 000 hectare reserve (two thirds of which is covered by water) is the first reserve in Poland that is not the property of the national government, but is owned by a NGO which has the full support of the local community and authorities. The area and its visitor centre are the basis for a range of activities in the field of education and capacity building supporting the local communities.

3.3 **The Netherlands: the province of Zeeland – Innovation in sustainable mussel production in Zeeland**

The Province of Zeeland in the Netherlands, situated on the North Sea, has encouraged innovation in the field of suspended mussel cultivation, partly at the instigation of the Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. Mussels from suspended cultivation are a natural product, with mussel spat being collected to grow on lines into a universally appreciated product. The supply of mussel spat varies from year to year and the demand is often greater than the supply. Two innovative developments have therefore been launched to look at the feasibility of increasing the supply of raw materials:

- a) the development of experimental mussel spat capture installations in order to harvest mussel larvae from the water, and
- b) breeding using broodstock and controlled development in a hatchery.

The first mussels produced using the latter method were ceremonially presented in July 2006 and duly eaten. They were named Commissioner mussels, after the Queen's Commissioner for Zeeland, Wim van Gelder. As chairman of the Innovation Platform for Aquaculture, the Commissioner played an important part in promoting research into mussel spat. The mussels bred in this way contribute to the maintenance of biodiversity in the waters of Zeeland.

3.4 Italy: the Emilia Romagna Region - Sustainable management of the fishing activities and of the fishing resources in the Adriatic Sea

The project is led by the Emilia-Romagna Region in Italy, and involves Veneto Region, Friuli- Venezia-Giulia Region and Consorzio Uniprom in Italy; and the cross-border partners: Istria Region and Primorsko-Goranska County in Croatia, Norfish and the Federal Chamber of Commerce in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Municipality of Izola in Slovenia.

This project aims to promote a cross-border process of sustainable socio-economic development for the fishery sector of the northern Adriatic area. It aims to reach this goal via the implementation of specific coordination and planning initiatives, while promoting qualified entrepreneurial initiatives in the northern Adriatic area within a general context of sustainable fishing. The project will set up a series of activities aimed at creating a favourable environment for small and medium fishing enterprises (SMEs) through cross-border integration and harmonisation of the fishing policies; coordination and responsible management of the sector; an increase of fish stocks available for the SMEs; promotion of innovation and diversification of traditional activities; exchanging experiences among SMEs; and specialisation of fishing operators.

4. To reinforce compatibility of regional and territorial development with biodiversity in the EU

4.1 France: Région Ile-de-France – Biodiversity as a key aspect for land-use planning

Although Île-de-France is a metropolitan region, it has an extremely varied natural heritage: forests, farmland and natural environments account for 80% of land in the region, and its flora and fauna display great ecological diversity. Almost 25% of the land is classified as a natural area of ecological, faunistic and floristic interest (Zone Naturelle d'Intérêt Ecologique, Faunistique et Floristique - ZNIEFF). For the wellbeing of its inhabitants, the Île-de-France Region is seeking to incorporate biodiversity into land-use planning and make it a key aspect of the master plan for the Île-de-France region (Schéma Directeur de la Région Île-de-France - SDRIF), and is working daily to preserve its landscapes and biological wealth, to maintain and create regional nature parks and to ensure the quality of farming. The Regional Council is committed to making Île-de-France Europe's top ecoregion.

4.2 **Example from an EFTA country, Norway: City of Oslo – Tailor made information for local planners and decision-makers**

The City of Oslo has decided that biologically important areas will be mapped in a GIS-based management tool to be used for all spatial planning. Development will not be allowed to take place in areas important for biodiversity. These areas will also be managed properly.

The Agency for Outdoor Recreation and Nature Management is performing a systematic field survey of the whole municipality, mapping important nature types and red-listed species. The field survey will be completed by 2006. The Agency also developed a management tool consisting of a nature database (Natura 2000) and updated maps. The database is a Norwegian system that is specially designed for use in the management of natural resources and biodiversity (in accordance with the national system for nature types). Once a year the polygons with valuable nature types and all the information contained in the databases are distributed to almost all agencies involved in planning and nature management. These data are made available through the computer network, allowing stakeholders to combine biological information with any other information that is relevant for planning issues. In addition, implementation courses have been held and procedures developed to ensure that individual planners check, incorporate and integrate biodiversity at an early stage of planning. An internet edition of the database is planned. Maps of the nature types and some of the data are available on the internet.

5. **To substantially reduce the impact on EU biodiversity of invasive alien species and alien genotypes**

5.1 **France: Région Ile-de-France - Crayfish research programme (populations and distribution)**

Crayfish are little known creatures, especially in periurban areas like Île-de-France. The Val d'Oise department comprises almost 300 km of waterways and many public and private bodies of water. In these waters, some native crayfish (*Autropotamobius pallipes*) are still to be found alongside exotic species such as the spiny-cheeked crayfish (*Orconectes limosus*), signal crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*) and red swamp crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*), which are particularly invasive colonising species that could seriously upset the balance of aquatic ecosystems.

A study is being conducted by the Val d'Oise federation for fishing and the protection of the aquatic environment (Fédération du Val d'Oise pour la pêche et la protection du Milieu Aquatique), in order to obtain a full overview of the different crayfish populations and their numbers, to measure changes in population numbers and geographical movements. This will make it possible to confirm the presence or absence of species requiring statutory protection or of new species which could harm aquatic ecosystems, and will enable proposals to be made

for the adjustment of legislation (proposed biotope order or regulation of invading species) and for the planning of habitats for indigenous species.

6. To substantially strengthen support for biodiversity and ecosystem services in EU external assistance

6.1 China: Development of Ecological Network Structure with European support and expertise

Following consultations and contacts with the Dutch Province of Noord-Brabant, China, and in particular the Province of Jiangsu, northwest of Shanghai, is interested in European and regional expertise on ecological networks, in particular the EU approach to Natura 2000. With the help of this expertise the region would like to develop itself into a model eco-province. A vital element of this aim is the development of an ecological network structure in Jiangsu. A consortium of governmental and non governmental institutes in the Netherlands, which is lead by Wageningen University and Research (WICE) and also includes the Province of Noord-Brabant, the Dutch government, and ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation, agreed to provide knowledge and expertise on ecological and environmental issues. It remains to be explored whether a programme for cooperation with the Province of Jiangsu could be part of the EU-China Biodiversity Programme (ECBP; 2005).

6.2 Vietnam: Involving local communities in biodiversity with the support of the French region Nord – Pas de Calais

Between 1997-2001, the French region Nord – Pas de Calais carried out a project (involving contractors such as Lille University of Science and Technology) with the overall objective of creating the right conditions for sustainable development in the Hue Lagoon, Vietnam, where biodiversity was under serious threat as result of overexploitation by local fishermen.

One of the objectives of the project was to collect essential data on the lagoon and to set up an experimental aquaculture nursery to develop aquaculture production and manage the resource. Moreover, an overall project for the conservation of the lagoon and its biodiversity was established. This included a development project aimed at developing the lagoon without overstressing resources by means of:

- knowledge of ecosystems;
- changes in fishing practices to prevent stock depletion;
- a plan to reduce the many causes of pollution, raising stakeholders' awareness;
- particular focus on developing tourism, encouraging eco-tourism.

By 2001, when the region's involvement in this cooperation ended, the biodiversity in the lagoon had improved considerably and started to bring major economic benefits to the local population:

- Mixed shrimp/fish farming: The project ensures the livelihood of 150 families on the south side of the lagoon and 200 families on the north side. Financial aid was provided to just the six "pioneer" families. A fisherman with a previous fishing income of five to six million dong now earns 40 million dong in net profit.
- Mussel farming: This type of aquaculture was set up from scratch by the programme and contributes a supplementary income of 15 to 20 million dong to the fishing incomes of 100 families.
- Pearl oyster farming: 1 000 oysters were introduced and the experiment produced 665 pearls ranging in value from \$20 to \$500 depending on their quality.
- Shrimp farming on sand: This type of aquaculture produces shrimps in sandy areas where other activities are impossible. Four families participated in the experiment, which covered 1 000 m² and produced 310 kilograms. Now, 24 families have taken up this type of aquaculture.

6.3 **Germany: Knowledge transfer from Bavaria to Israel**

The National Park of Berchtesgaden (under the authority of the Bavarian ministry for the environment) carried out a project together with the National Park Administration in Israel to reintroduce the Oryx antelope to the Golan Heights. The Bavarian National Park transferred knowledge on methods of wildlife-research and radio tracking of great mammals.

7. **To substantially reduce the impact of international trade on global biodiversity and ecosystem services**

7.1 **France: Ile-de-France Region - Wood-buying guide for regional authorities**

As part of its campaign to protect the rainforests, Friends of the Earth is seeking to draw up a technical guide to help regional authorities define a timber purchasing policy that does not contribute to tropical deforestation. The Region Ile-de-France is providing funding for this project. The guide aims to provide the technical information necessary to implement such a policy, and will help authorities' buyers and technical departments select timber species. In particular, the guide will identify those wood products on the market which display credible environmental characteristics and eco-labels.

An awareness campaign about the consumption of tropical timber in France could have an impact on the conservation of African forests. France is the biggest importer of tropical timber from African forests, accounting for 20% of imports. Azobe, Iroko, Moabi and Sapelli wood is sold in increasing quantities and is finding its way into our houses in the shape of furniture, flooring, doors and windows. Public authorities account for a significant proportion

(approximately 25%) of tropical timber consumption in France. Timber consumption in the context of public procurement is therefore sufficient to justify making an ethical commitment, which could have a real impact on the tropical timber market in France.

8. **To substantially strengthen the knowledge base for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in the EU and globally**

8.1 **ICLEI – Local Action for Biodiversity**

Biodiversity issues and concerns must be fully integrated into local planning and policy making processes. The City of Cape Town, with the support of Ethekwini Municipality (Durban), took the lead on this, and proposed to the members of the 2006 ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability World Congress that a **Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB)** programme be initiated. This proposal was adopted by the ICLEI Council during the ICLEI World Congress in Cape Town on 3 March 2006.

The goal of the LAB Project is to bring together 15 cities from a range of global contexts, to explore the best ways for local governments to engage in effective biodiversity protection, utilisation and management.

Core Goals of the project are:

- raise the profile of biodiversity issues at local government level;
- raise awareness of the need for local action for biodiversity and respective framework conditions at global and national level;
- rally the efforts and resources of a select group of committed local governments in developing a set of tools through which biodiversity issues and concerns can be effectively and efficiently drawn into the planning, decision-making and implementation processes of local governments worldwide;
- achieve tangible results in the participating cities;
- on the basis of the process and outcomes of the LAB project, design and substantiate a fully-fledged ICLEI programme that focuses on biodiversity;
- encourage ICLEI to adopt this programme at the ICLEI World Congress in 2009.

8.2 **The Netherlands: Province of South-Holland – Agro-biodiversity as the key to achieving sustainable rural areas**

The Province of South Holland, together with the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, launched a programme that invites the public in the Hoeksche Waard (an arable area just south of the city of Rotterdam) to put forward ideas concerning the value of biodiversity in their own lives. The synergy caused by the cooperation of citizens, farmers, policy makers and scientists resulted in practical creativity. A great number of plans were developed giving the term “biodiversity” practical meaning.

An important part of the plans was to make creative use of nature for the benefit of agriculture and rural development. The main idea was to create unsprayed and un-manured buffer zones (field margins) adjacent to all ditches and creeks, sown with flowers, to attract natural predators and thus contribute to natural pest suppression. Field margins offer a winter habitat and supplementary source of food for naturally occurring predators. In spring time, predators enter the crop and prey upon the first pest populations. Flower strips in summer support parasitoids which can control and suppress aphid populations.

Moreover, the ditches and creeks are protected from spray drift and run off of fertilisers or pesticides from agricultural land. This improves the water quality tremendously. Another benefit is the reduction of soil erosion in these riparian field margins.

In order to make the rural areas more attractive and accessible for tourists, the field margins and flower strips contain walking paths, creating a whole new and colourful network.

Some 200 kilometres of field margins have been created in a period of little more than one year. Additionally, some 400 ha have been subject to sustainable planning and within those 400 ha "beetle banks"/field margins also play an important role. In the near future, a further 1 000 kilometres of field margins and flower strips will appear in the Hoeksche Waard region. This project is the first large-scale field experiment of natural pest suppression in Europe.

8.3 **Example from a candidate country, Croatia: City of Zagreb - Awareness raising for Countdown 2010**

In 2006 a project developed by the ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation in cooperation with ICLEI, the Department of Botany of the Faculty of Science of the University of Zagreb, the Croatian Natural History Museum, the Croatian Ornithological Society, and the City of Zagreb (City Bureau for Spatial Planning) was launched.

Awareness raising and public participation in biodiversity conservation are the main goals of the project. While some project partners are responsible for collecting basic data on urban biodiversity, the City Bureau for Spatial Planning is coordinating awareness raising activities targeted at the general public and decision makers, scheduled to begin in the second phase of the project. To accomplish these tasks, the Bureau set up a network of collaborators which currently include:

- City administrative bodies (Office for Strategic Planning and City Development; Bureau for the Protection of Natural and Historical Monuments, Office for Agriculture and Forestry, Office for Culture, Education and Sport, etc.);
- Local self-government – city districts and their councils as decision makers;
- Cultural centres with a wide spectrum of activities;

- Companies responsible for major sport and recreational zones and park management within the city;
- Regional Environmental Centre Croatia.

In order to improve awareness of the importance of urban biodiversity (which is a precondition for public participation) and to stimulate public involvement, the public will be approached in a range of different ways. These will include photo competitions, interactive web pages, questionnaires for schoolchildren and nursery children, as well as their parents (carried out in selected schools and nurseries), and educational leaflets for different target groups.

9. **Building public education, awareness and participation**

9.1 **United Kingdom: Manchester City Council's biodiversity campaign**

Currently the Council of Manchester is working alongside the BBC on a national campaign to protect biodiversity. The campaign is called Breathing Places and its aim over three years is to transform over 50 000 places to benefit wildlife and to enthuse over 1 000 000 volunteers. Manchester is already leading the way with this as many projects have already signed up to the aim and we are running a school grounds competition to create a wildlife garden in the autumn.

Promoting biodiversity good practise across the City of Manchester has been key in other projects as well. The City runs a biodiversity campaign called "Wild About Manchester" where householders and schools are engaged in nature conservation events. Since 20 February 2006 there have been more than 75 nature conservation projects run in all wards of Manchester with over 1 000 participants including local community groups, schools and individuals working hard to look after the city's wildlife. There has been 3 new ponds created, 8 fruit orchards planted, 4 wildflower meadows planted, and 12 wildlife hedges being created. One of the great successes of the campaign has been that 1 000 nest boxes have been made and put up in parks, gardens and school grounds.

9.2 **Belgium: Limburg - Local authorities as foster parents of native species**

Belgian Limburg is known for its "green" image; More than 40% of Flanders' natural environment is to be found in Limburg.

In order to give rare and endangered species a better chance of survival, the provincial administration of Limburg, in cooperation with Limburg Regionale Landschappen, took the initiative of launching a unique model project for Europe: the Limburg species project.

One of the aims of the Limburg species project is that municipal authorities "adopt" a rare or endangered Limburg species and take responsibility for it, acting as a sort of foster parents plan for our fauna and flora.

The Limburg species project is financed by the province of Limburg with support from the EU (European Regional Development Fund, ERDF).

And the results have made themselves felt: all 44 municipalities in Limburg have already adopted a native Limburg species. Species such as the common tree frog, the weather loach, the European nightjar and the badger, are receiving more and more attention.

The next step is to draw up an Action Plan for all these species in conjunction with the municipal authorities.

10. **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

10.1 **UK: Warwickshire - Sub-Regional Habitat Biodiversity Audit**

The Warwickshire sub-regional Habitat Biodiversity Audit (HBA), a field by field/boundary by boundary survey of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull's biodiversity habitats, was begun in 1995 and remains active. It has collected habitat data for the whole sub-region, held in a Geographical Information System, which provides digital mapping and an associated analytical database. This ground-breaking initiative is being used by all the unitary, county and district authorities in the sub-region for influencing policies and for subsequent monitoring in development control, forward planning, biodiversity action plans, Mineral extraction, land restoration/creation plus agri-environment schemes.

The HBA partnership currently comprises Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Coventry City Council, North Warwickshire Borough Council, Rugby Borough Council, Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council, Stratford on Avon District Council, Warwick District Council, and Warwickshire County Council plus English Nature (EN) and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. Other interested organisations who wish to join the partnership are the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Rural Development Service), the Environment Agency, British Waterways and the Warwickshire Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group. A targeted programme of re-survey keeps the resource up-to-date and accurate – which needs continuing funding from all partners.

Current projects include:

- Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project
- Archaeological Assessment of Aggregates in Warwickshire
- EN Grassland Inventory update (National)
- Coventry Urban/Rural Fringe Landscape Character study.

Recent enquiries of the HBA include:

- Pilot study of Climate Change Indicators (for DEFRA through Warwick University/Wellesbourne Research Association).
-