



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate B - Nature
ENV.B.2 - Biodiversity
ENV.B.3 - Natura 2000

CGBN

**Co-ordination Group
for Biodiversity and Nature**

8th meeting – 22/06/10



Brussels, 16. 07. 2010
ENV.B.2-B.3 (2010) Ares

**OPERATIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8TH MEETING
OF THE CO-ORDINATION GROUP FOR BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE (CGBN)
HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2010 (BORSCHETTE CENTRE, BRUSSELS – 10.30 UNTIL 17.30)**

Participants (see attached list)

This operational summary record is to be seen in parallel with the supporting documents prepared by the Commission and posted on the CGBN CIRCA site prior to the meeting (http://circa.europa.eu/Members/irc/env/biodiversity_nature/home - site with registered access). All presentations made during the meeting can also be found on the CIRCA site.

Chair: Stefan Leiner (ENV.B.3 "Natura 2000") for the morning session and François Wakenhut (ENV.B.2 "Biodiversity") for the afternoon session

1) Summary Record of the Previous Meeting (2nd March 2010)

The summary record of the previous meeting was approved subject to one small correction in the participants' list.

2) Implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directives

The following issues had been identified for discussion prior to the meeting. An exchange of views followed presentations by the Commission, with the following outcome:

✓ **Management of Natura 2000 Sites** (see DOC.2-1 and Powerpoint presentation): CGBN participants were updated on the main discussions of the 3rd meeting of the expert working group on Management of Natura 2000, which took place on 21st June 2010.

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As set out in the terms of reference of this expert working group the initial focus has been on clarifying and promoting a better understanding of the basic principles of SACs' designation and the setting of conservation objectives before going further into the real Natura 2000 management issue¹. Discussions on these key issues may have been considered less necessary by some EU15 Member States, especially for those that are already quite advanced in SACs' designation, but the exchange of views, sharing of experience and clarifications brought was welcomed by other countries, especially new Member States who are only starting their designation process. Whereas there is no deadline in the Directive for achieving the conservation objectives it was emphasised that they should be identified and specified for the sites at the time of designation.

The Commission does not intend to further discuss the issue of SACs' designation in the management group but, having regard to the feedback received, will prepare a note setting out its position on this subject to be presented to the Habitats Committee for its next meeting on 17th November 2010 (with copy to the CGBN). Further consideration will be needed on the issue of conservation objectives at the next meeting of the group and delegates have been invited to submit their views and experience on the subject.

The group will start looking more in details at sites' management and Member States having considerable experience in the matter will be invited to share their views and feedback, in particular regarding management plans.

The Commission mentioned that it was considering a future 'biogeographical type process, linking monitoring and reporting and having regard to reporting under Article 17 and site management planning. It intends to set out its ideas in a document, with a view to its possible consideration at the next Nature Directors' and CGBN meetings in the autumn.

✓ **Illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds** (see DOC.2-2 and Powerpoint presentation by BirdLife): BirdLife presented the first results of a survey among its members to better understand the issue of illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds in the European Union. The survey is based on a questionnaire developed by BirdLife with FACE. Respondents were asked to list the main illegal activities occurring in their country and to rate them regarding different criteria. BirdLife clarified that the survey was not a scientific study but was aimed at giving a preliminary overview of the problem and its scale. It has appeared that the most common and worrying activities involve the use of poisons, killing of raptors, usage of illegal traps, killing of birds in protected areas and killing of protected species for recreation.

Participants welcomed the willingness of the Commission to address this issue in co-operation with BirdLife, FACE and the Council of Europe, the distinction made between hunting and illegal killing of birds and the collaboration between BirdLife and FACE. They recognized that illegal activities occurred in different part of the EU, not always on their respective territory, and that a co-ordinated action could be valuable. In relation to some reservations expressed on the methodology of the survey and concerns that its results could be misused or misinterpreted it was recalled that the results were accessible on the CGBN restricted site only to authorized persons and they should not be considered as official information but as a preliminary attempt to assess the problem. The need to involve stakeholders, to collect good examples on how to tackle the problem and to implement research programs was stressed. The results of this survey will be discussed among FACE members and will be further considered by the CGBN with a view to identifying concrete action ahead of a relevant conference to be organised by the Council of Europe in mid-2011.

¹ See also report to last CGBN meeting of 2nd March 2010, in which these details were set out (DOC.3.A-2)

✓ **Legal issues / Court rulings relating to the two Nature Directives** (see DOC.2-3 and Powerpoint presentation by DG ENV's Legal Unit.A.2): The most important recent case laws were presented. The main conclusion that can be drawn is that it is often difficult for the Commission to provide the necessary "burden of proof" of Nature Directives' implementation breach. In many cases, however, the judgement reinforces the legal clarity of the Nature legislation.

CGBN members are welcome to send any questions they may have to Stefan Leiner.

3) Recent and Upcoming Meetings (see DOC.3-1)

The recent and upcoming meetings table is updated on a monthly basis on the CGBN circa site. In particular:

✓ **Past event: Workshop on Water and Biodiversity held on 17th-18th June 2010:** All workshop documents (compilation of case studies, FAQs paper, workshop report,...) are available to download from the following circa site:

http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/env/wfd/library?l=/framework_directive/implementation_convention/biodiversity_legislation&vm=detailed&sb=Title

A note to Nature and Water Directors will now be prepared regarding the operational follow-up to the workshop. CGBN members will be kept informed.

✓ **New event: TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity):** TEEB for Businesses (so called "D3" report) will be launched on the occasion of a major Business and Biodiversity Conference to be held on 13th July 2010 in London.

✓ **New event: Invasive species:** Stakeholder consultation on 3rd September 2010 in Brussels.

4) Biodiversity Policy

The following issues had been identified for discussion prior to the meeting. An exchange of views followed presentations to the CGBN, with the following outcome:

A) Development of Post-2010 Biodiversity Policy

✓ **Towards sub-targets and related measures to deliver on the EU 2020 biodiversity vision and target** (see DOC.4.A-1 and Powerpoint presentations by EEA): The EEA presented the biodiversity baseline as well as the latest version of the BISE (biodiversity information system for Europe) portal. A general discussion took place on the quality assurance and quality control of the data published in the portal. It was explained that the Biodiversity Topic Centre would have a very key role to play in ensuring the data quality control. It was indicated that submissions for BISE could be sent to the web addressed included therein.

There was a request to include resource efficiency in the agenda of the next meeting.

A brief account was given of the outcomes of the stakeholder consultation that was held on 3rd June 2010 during the Green Week. A written summary will be made available to all participants. It was recalled that the Belgian Presidency event which would be held in Ghent on 8th and 9th September 2010 would also provide a good opportunity to continue debating on the content of the future Biodiversity Strategy.

Some delegations stressed the importance of securing the necessary political support for the upcoming strategy in order to avoid any future failure. There was a discussion on the possible subtargets as proposed by DG ENV for the upcoming EU Biodiversity Strategy. The floor was

given particularly to the delegations which would not attend the Commission - Member States informal meeting to be held the following day. Some participants argued that they were not in a position to provide input as in their view it was not clear from the agenda that this discussion would take place during the meeting. It was stressed that a clearer definition of Green Infrastructure was needed. Some called for a subtarget on monitoring to improve the knowledge base. The need to address restoration within the subtargets was also highlighted. Some argued that Agriculture should not be listed as the first subtarget in order to avoid giving the impression that this sector was addressed with priority over the others. To the question whether there was a prioritisation among the sub-targets, the Commission replied that it did not intend to convey any prioritisation or ranking between the subtargets proposed. Some delegations expressed the view that forestry should also be among the subtargets. Member States while providing general comments they reserved their detailed comments for the next day meeting.

B) Green Infrastructure

✓ **Towards the development of an EU strategy on Green Infrastructure** (see DOC.4.B-1 and Powerpoint presentation): The Commission presented the current development of the Green Infrastructure initiative planned for 2011 as well as inform participants of the steps towards its preparation.

Interest was expressed in the concept and its relevance for future biodiversity policy. At the same time, the need to reach a clear, common, understanding of the concept and its policy applications at EU level was conveyed. The scope and outputs, the relationship with other post-2010 sub-targets and the specific added value of this initiative – in particular in line with the subsidiarity principle - should be highlighted. The communication need towards other sectors was emphasized.

Issues such as connectivity and the links to Art. 10 of the Habitats Directive, measures in the wider countryside, the adaptation potential, investment in green capital and capturing ecosystem services as well as integrated spatial planning were welcomed. Recommendations were given on how to ensure the subsidiarity principle within the strategy, on the high potential to deliver on the restoration issue included in the post-2010 vision, on the need for intelligent integration of biodiversity into other sectors through Green Infrastructure (maximising funding compatibility and to minimise subsidies detrimental for biodiversity) and on the responsibility of other sectors than nature conservation for biodiversity - Green Infrastructure could foster more sustainable use of natural resources.

Further recommendations covered the wish to explicitly mention core elements of Green Infrastructure such as wetlands, rivers and the marine environment. The concept should stimulate EU-wide coherent implementation, additionally to what has been achieved in Member States; it could deliver a tool kit for the further implementation of such initiatives on European scale. Emphasis was given on the high potential offered by the current revision of funding schemes, which could be used for further financing Green Infrastructure, and the cross-border character of the concept.

Belgium informed on the upcoming presidency conference in Ghent on 8th-9th September 2010, on biodiversity post-2010: "Biodiversity in a changing world", covering to a wide part Green Infrastructure topics. The Commission informed participants on the planned EC conference on Green Infrastructure on 19th November 2010 in Brussels.

C) Mapping of Ecosystem Services

✓ **Update on mapping of ecosystem services of EU importance** (see DOC.4.C-1 and Powerpoint presentation by JRC): The Joint Research Centre presented the state of progress on the development of ecosystem services mapping at EU level in support of the post-2010 biodiversity strategy. It underlined that focus of mapping exercise is on capacity of ecosystems (not on flows).

Member States welcomed this initiative and referred to similar national exercises (such as in Belgium and Germany), emphasizing the role of economic values and the links to TEEB information, which will be integrated in the JRC ecosystem services mapping exercise once available. Participants proposed scenarios to be developed on how much investment would be needed for receiving what kind of benefit from ecosystems. Recommendations were given to carefully use the aggregation of ecosystem services, as it could lead to misinterpretation, and to thoroughly document the usability of the produced maps, their limits and interpretation. Special attention should be given to the role of biodiversity in ecosystem services and the spatial dimension when a combination of services is identified. JRC stressed the close links to EEA environmental accounting and ecosystem assessment work.

5) Any Other Business

✓ **Dates of CGBN meetings in 2011:** Tuesdays 1st March 2011, 28th June 2011 and 15th November 2011. The next meeting in 2010 will be Thursday 18th November 2010.

6) Information points

- Financing Natura 2000 (DOC.6.-1)
- Reporting under the Birds and Habitats Directives (DOC.6.-2)
- Expert working group on Wolves - Latest developments (DOC.6.-3)
- Conference on birds' protection and conservation (DOC.6.-4)
- Biodiversity Action Plan (DOC.6.-5)
- Biodiversity monitoring component in LUCAS (DOC.6.-6)

The activities under these documents were just for information and were not discussed in the meeting. These written contributions had been posted on the circa site a few days prior to the meeting and CGBN participants have until 1st September 2010 to comment on them.

Enclosure: List of participants

**8TH MEETING OF THE CO-ORDINATION GROUP FOR BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE
HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2010 IN BRUSSELS**

Participants' list

Member States:

- Austria: Edda-Maria BERTEL
- Belgium: Els MARTENS, Catherine DEBRUYNE
- Cyprus: Christina PANTAZI
- Czech Republic: Michael HOSEK, Alena VACATKOVA
- Denmark: Lars RUDFELD
- Estonia: Hanno ZINGEL, Kadri MÖLLER
- Finland: Jussi SORAMÄKI, Heikki KORPELAINEN, Janne PITKÄNEN
- France: Fanny LENDI-RAMIREZ
- Germany: Christa RATTE, Detlef SZYMANSKI
- Hungary: Eva SASHALMI
- Ireland: Ciaran O'KEEFFE
- Malta: Nadia SUDA LANZON
- The Netherlands: Martin LOK
- Poland: Anna LIRO
- Portugal: Mario SILVA
- Romania: Fulvia COJOCARU
- Slovenia: Julijana LEBEZ-LOZEJ
- Spain: Rafael HIDALGO, Tania LOPEZ PINEIRO, Daniel SERRANO
- Sweden: Michael LÖFROTH, Eva STIGHÄLL
- United Kingdom: Steve LEE-BAPTY, Steven DORA

Excused: Slovak Republic

Not represented: Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg

NGOs and other stakeholders:

- BirdLife: Rastislav RYBANIC
- CEPF (Confédération européenne des propriétaires forestiers): Marta GAWORSKA
- COPA-COGECA (Committee of Professional Agriculture Organizations - General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the EU): Tania RUNGE
- ECNC (European Centre for Nature Conservation): Ben DELBAERE
- EHF (European Habitats Forum): Sarolta TRIPOLSKY
- ELO (European Landowners' Organization): Ana ROCHA
- EPBRS (European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy): Sybille VAN DEN HOVE, Allan WATT
- FACE (Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU): Angus MIDDLETON, Cy GRIFFIN
- FOE (Friends of the Earth): Friedrich WULF
- IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature): Andras KROLOPP
- UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme): Thierry LUCAS
- WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature): Andreas BAUMUELLER

Excused: EIB (European Investment Bank)

Not represented: BusinessEurope, COE (Council of Europe), EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), EEB (European Environment Bureau)

European Environment Agency / European Topic Centre: Ivone PEREIRA MARTINS, Carlos ROMAO / Marita ARVELA

European Commission:

Attended all or part of the meeting:

François WAKENHUT, Valentina BASTINO, Szilvia BÖSZE, Myriam DUMORTIER, Marco FRITZ, Marta KACZYNSKA, Claudia OLAZABAL, Chiara ORSINI, Natalie PAUWELS, Anne TELLER, Susanne WEGEFELT (ENV.B.2)

Stefan LEINER, Sylvia BAROVA, Marco CIPRIANI, Annick DE LOMBAERDE, Frederica DOTTI, Ctibor KOČMAN, François KREMER, Micheal O'BRIAN, Fotis PAPOULIAS, Angelika RUBIN, Mariam SANCHEZ GUISANDEZ, Joseph VAN DER STEGEN (ENV.B.3)

Patrick WEGERDT (ENV.A.2)

Christine ESTREGUIL, Joachim MAES (JRC)

Astrid KAEMENA (DG RTD)

