

NATURA 2000

IN GERMANY



Nature's jewels
Short version

IMPRESSUM

Cover photo

Wild cat in beech forest (Fotos: A. Hoffmann, Th. Stephan)
Collage: cognitio

Editors

- Axel Ssymank, Sandra Balzer, Bundesamt für Naturschutz, Fachgebiet 1.2.2 „FFH-Richtlinie und Natura 2000“
- Christa Ratte, BMU, Ref. N12 „Gebietsschutz“
- Martin Dieterich, ILN Singen
- Burkhard Beinlich, Benjamin Hill, Bioplan Höxter / Marburg

Picture Editors

- Frank Grawe, Landschaftsstation im Kreis Höxter

List of authors

- Balzer, Sandra (Bundesamt für Naturschutz)
- Beinlich, Burkhard (Bioplan Höxter / Marburg)
- Dieterich, Martin (ILN Singen)
- Ssymank, Axel (Bundesamt für Naturschutz)

Translation

Martin Dieterich, ILN Singen
Janice M. Harmon, Corvallis, Oregon

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European Union

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm

German Federal Government

www.bfn.de/0316_natura2000.html
www.bmu.de/naturschutz_biologische_vielfalt/natura_2000/doc/20286.php

EEZ

www.habitatmare.de

Baden-Württemberg

www.naturschutz.landbw.de/servlet/PB/menu/1157984/index.htm

Bavaria

www.stmugv.bayern.de/umwelt/naturschutz/natura2000/index.htm
www.forst.bayern.de/funktionen-des-waldes/biologische-vielfalt/schutzgebiete/natura2000/index.php

Berlin

www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/umwelt/naturschutz/de/schutzgebiete/natura2000/natura2000.shtml

Brandenburg

www.mluv.brandenburg.de/cms/detail.php/5l1bm1.c.182169.de

Bremen

www.umwelt.bremen.de/de/detail.php?gsid=bremen02.c.3406.de

Hamburg

<http://fhh.hamburg.de/stadt/Aktuell/behoerden/stadtentwicklung-umwelt/natur-stadtgruen/natur/schutzgebiete/natura-2000/start.html>

Hesse

www.hmulv.hessen.de/irj/HMULV_Internet?uid=e7e07118-ff12-701b-e592-63b5005ae75d

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

www.lung.mv-regierung.de/insite/cms/umwelt/natur/schutzgebiete/schutzgebiete_eu.htm

Lower Saxony

www.umwelt.niedersachsen.de/master/C540693_N11312_L20_DO_1598.html

Northrhine-Westfalia

www.natura2000.munlv.nrw.de

Rhineland-Palatine

www.natura2000-rlp.de/

Saxony

www.smul.sachsen.de/de/wu/umwelt/natura2000/index_start.htm

Saxony-Anhalt

www.mu.sachsen-anhalt.de/start/fachbereich04/natura2000/main.htm

Saarland

www.saarland.de/8881.htm

Schleswig-Holstein

www.natura2000-sh.de

Thuringia

www.thueringen.de/de/tmlnu/themen/naturschutz/natura2000/



FOREWORD

European Natural Heritage: Natura 2000 – challenges and opportunities

Nature is the key to our survival; it forms the basis of both our homeland and our cultural landscapes. One of the most important while at the same time one of the most demanding challenges of our time, is to preserve our natural heritage for future generations and, thus, to permanently retain our current quality of life. This challenge has been broadly recognized: In the Gothenburg declaration, the Heads of State of the European Union (EU) member states have committed themselves to halt the loss of biodiversity by the year 2010. In this context, biodiversity encompasses the diversity of both species and habitat types.

Within the EU, the ecological network of protected areas – called Natura 2000 – is of key importance for the achievement of the 2010-target. The Natura 2000 sites have been designated based on the provisions stated in the Habitats Directive (1992) and the Birds Directive (1979). To me, the Natura 2000 sites represent the jewels of European nature conservation. Germany holds many precious natural assets and cultural landscapes. As a consequence, 14.1% of German territory has been designated as Natura 2000 sites. This comprises more than 10% of the European Natura 2000 network. Located in the heart of Europe, Germany has a specific responsibility for the preservation of the European natural heritage.

One of the most important and largest Natura 2000 areas in Central Europe is located along the German coastline of the North Sea: the Wadden Sea that is shaped by tidal dynamic. For 10 to 12 million

Germany can be proud of its achievements in implementing the Natura 2000 provisions. In Germany, Natura 2000 provides an excellent example for the preservation of the diversity of life in the context of cultural landscapes.

This brochure is designed to explain the goals and concepts behind Natura 2000 in a compressed way. It includes examples relating to the implementation of the Natura 2000 network. The brochure targets the general public, policy and economic decision makers, as well as landowners and related professional groups such as farmers and foresters. Successful implementation of Natura 2000 depends on the integration and active support from these different groups. My particular concern is for the public to recognize the importance of the protection of our natural resources, and the Natura 2000 network in particular. This is an important investment in our future that is going to yield long-term benefit!

Sigmar Gabriel
Federal Minister of Environment (BMU)

birds, the Wadden Sea provides breeding habitat, a retreat during moulting, an area for over wintering and an important resting site along the eastern Atlantic flyway.

Photo: A. Hoffmann



GERMANY'S NATURE CONSERVATION IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

Germany is located in the heart of Europe. Within the Natura 2000 network of protected sites, it has the primary responsibility for the continued preservation of central European ecosystems such as beech forests or the Wadden Sea, which is absolutely unique on a global scale.

Nine biogeographical regions comprise the reference and evaluation areas for the implementation of the EU conservation efforts. Since Germany is centrally located, the German territory provides a significant share of the Continental and the Atlantic

regions. In addition, a narrow stretch of the Alpine region is also located in Germany. Corresponding to the natural areas they encompass, EU Member States contribute to the Natura 2000 network. Mediterranean countries such as Spain contribute cork and holm oak forests, Nordic countries contribute boreal forests, the Baltic States contribute large and intact bogs and fens. As a consequence, the beauty and diversity of many popular vacation sites for German tourists will be preserved within the Natura 2000 network (for example on the Canary Islands or on Madeira).



Photo: B. Beinlich
Active raised bog with lake and bog woodland (Habitat Types 7110*, 3160 and 9100), Estonia.



Photo: F. Grawe
Asperulo-Fagetum beech forest (Habitat Type 9130), Germany.



Photo: F. Grawe
Alpine ibex (Annex V-species) on alpine calcareous grasslands (Habitat Type 6170).

Biogeographic regions
Source: Federal Agency for Nature Conservation 2007

- Atlantic
- Continental
- Alpine
- Mediterranean
- Macronesian
- Boreal
- Pannonian
- Steppe
- Black Sea

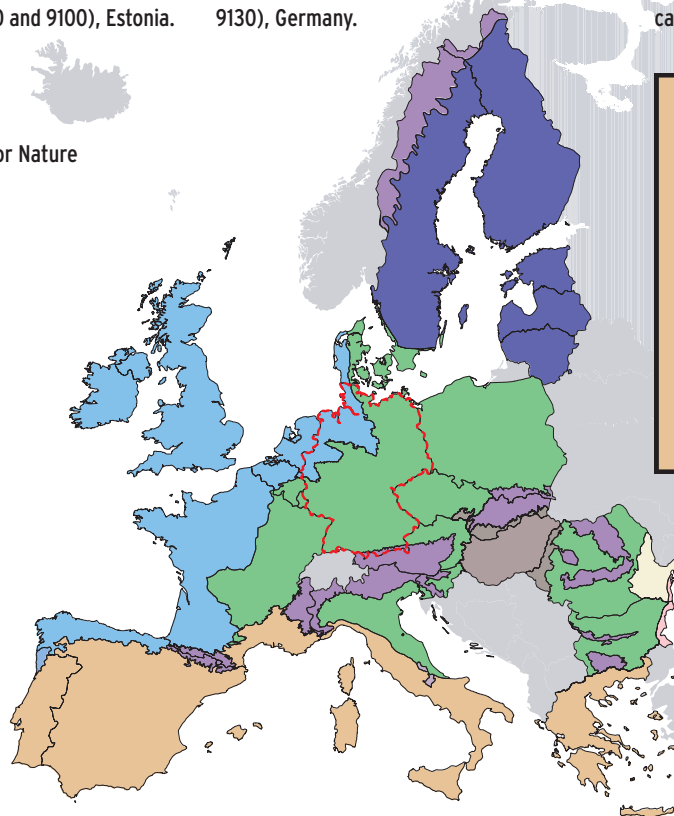


Photo: B. Beinlich
Dehesa pastoral forest (Habitat Type 6310), Spain.

NATURE IS WITHOUT BORDERS!

Nature is without borders! Therefore, common European regulations are particularly important. It would not make sense to protect a species of songbird in Germany, that subsequently could be legally hunted along its migration routes! European regulations are also important economically and politically. Otherwise, competitive disadvantage may result from environmental legislation passed and subsequently applied only in single member states. The Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) provide the basic foundation for nature conservation in the EU. Both nature conservation directives have legal status in the member states, but they are certainly not imposed upon the member states. Rather, intense negotiations among all the EU member states resulted in the draft and subsequent passage of these documents designed to effectively protect biological diversity. In the Federal Republic of Germany, both directives are implemented at the national level through the Federal Nature Conservation Act and subsequently through state conservation laws. The Bundesländer (Federal States) are responsible for the delineation and management of the protected areas that form the Natura 2000 network. The responsibility of the Federal Government is limited to areas and species beyond coastal waters in the so called Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ, 12–200 nautical miles off the coast). After intense analysis and consultation, ten marine Natura 2000 sites were delineated in the German EEZ and nominated to the EU Commission in 2004.

The wolf requires a large territory to obtain sufficient prey. The wolf returned to Germany a few years ago.

Photo: F. Grawe



Natura 2000 in my view is the most developed and best known approach for efficient conservation of nature, especially in densely populated areas like our European home. For the first time in the history, we are creating a comprehensive and coherent system based on scientific knowledge, recognizing the principal role of natural habitats and their representativeness. One of the beauties of this approach is, that it does not exclude other activities – if they don't harm the substance. The key now is the right and flexible implementation.

Ladislav Miko
European Commission
DG Environment
Director
Directorat B (Natural Resources
Protection and Biodiversity)

PRESERVE NATURAL DIVERSITY

Natural diversity in Germany is an invaluable treasure! There are 28,000 species of plants and mushrooms (including mosses, ferns and lichens) and 45,000 species of animals in approximately 690 different habitat types in Germany. Our landscape is characterized by rather typical habitat types: colourful flowering meadows, dunes along beaches, and beech and oak forests which provide shade and cover. How can this diversity be effectively protected? What species warrant specific protection? Long lists of endangered species and habitat types provide a clear indication: in Germany more than 2/3 of the habitat types and 40% of the plant and animal species are considered to be endangered, many of them are at the brink of extinction. There are taxonomic groups where up to 70% of the native species are red listed. There is the possibility that a species which is severely endangered and very rare in Germany is still common in Spain or Italy. The annexes of the Habitats Directive only list species “of community importance” – the basic condition for listing is, for example: that the species and habitat types in question are endangered on a European scale (throughout the European Union), that severe decline has been recorded or that there is a particular European responsibility for their protection.



Most natural forests in Germany are dominated by deciduous trees. The European beech, a species restricted to Europe, with its centre of distribution in Germany, is characteristic of natural forests. Germany, therefore, has a particular responsibility for the preservation and protection of beech forests.



Photos: F. Grawe

Calcareous semi-dry grasslands, like the one pictured within the “Warmberg-Osterberg” Natura 2000 site, are among the most species rich grassland habitats in central Europe. These grasslands have been shaped by human use and can only be preserved if traditional low intensity use – usually low intensity sheep grazing – continues. Inclusion of this habitat type on the list of European natural heritage is an important contribution for its continued preservation.

THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK

For the first time, a European-wide reserve system, named Natura 2000, has been established based on identical legal premises. This system includes both the protected sites under the Birds Directive (SPA, Special Protected Areas) and the Habitats Directive (SAC, Special Areas of Conservation). A very particular and important aspect of the Natura 2000 system is that site selection was solely based on the needs of endangered species and the quality of existing endangered habitat types. Political or economic arguments were not considered valid in the selection process. This site selection process is reasonable because endangered species and habitat types must be protected at the most suitable sites. Restricting site selection to areas that are not affected by current or future use or plans would certainly fail to provide effective protection. In fact, the best sites were selected to ensure long-term survival. In order to create uniformly understood guidelines for the delineation of Natura 2000 sites between EU member states, those species and habitat types requiring the selection of specific protected sites are listed in Annex I and II of the Habitats Directive and Annex I of the Birds Directive. As soon as the Natura 2000 sites have been selected, economic and social factors can be considered in the implementation of site management, however, only as long as such con-

siderations do not significantly impact species and habitat types intended to be protected by the Natura 2000 network. In addition, regulations which are uniform throughout Europe apply to plans and projects that might impair the conservation goals of any particular site.

Within Natura 2000 sites, land use practices, including those of forestry and agriculture, will have to be devised so that our natural and cultural landscapes, with their regional peculiarities and richness, can be preserved in the best way possible. Land use will require coordination with nature conservation targets. Stakeholder interests will be considered in the context of site management.



Flower-rich hay meadow with meadow sage (Habitat Type 6510) in the SCI "Kalkmagerrasen bei Ossendorf, Diemel Valley (Federal State of Northrhine-Westfalia).

Photos: F. Grawe

Total area of SPAs (Special Protected Areas, Birds Directive) and SCIs (Sites of Community Importance, Habitats Directive) in Germany. SCIs formally protected under national legislation become Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

A national Natura 2000 list with 4,617 SCIs and 658 SPAs was forwarded to the European Commission. In part, identical sites have been listed as both SPA and SCI. Therefore, the total number of Natura 2000 sites in Germany amounts to 5,101 (as of July 2007, source BfN).

	SCIs/SACs	SPAs	Natura 2000 sites
total number of sites	4,617	658	5,101
combined total area (ha)	5,329,477	5,046,446	7,374,361
total area terrestrial sites (ha)	3,313,066	3,361,707	5,034,069
total area marine sites* (ha)	2,016,411	1,684,739	2,340,292
proportion of German territory	9.3 %	9.4 %	ca. 14.1 %
proportion of German territorial waters*	ca. 35 %	ca. 34 %	ca. 41 %
* including the EEZ (Economic Exclusive Zone)			



Some habitat types are endangered all over Europe and therefore characterized as "priority" habitat types. Active raised bogs such as the "Schwarze Moor" in the "Bayerische Hohe Rhön" Natura 2000 site are among the priority habitat types. Stricter conservation requirements apply to priority habitat types and, thus, higher standards for appropriate (impact) assessments.



I associate three aspects with the Natura 2000 network: the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive represent groundbreaking approaches towards the protection and preservation of the European natural heritage. In the past years, the nodes of a European network of ecosystems and habitats for threatened species have been identified in close co-operation between policy, administration and civil society. We now face the challenge to develop these nodes into a coherent network. A network that is stable and at the same time flexible enough to resist the enormous impacts from climate change.

*Olaf Tschimpke
President NABU (Birdlife
International, Germany)*

SPECIES PROTECTION

Not every species can be effectively protected within reserve boundaries. Some species are migratory, others have large spatial requirements or use particular sites within whole landscapes to satisfy different basic needs (e.g. rearing of the young, food acquisition, hibernation). For these species listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive, rather than trying to delineate huge reserves, it is more sensible to impose a specific species protection regime to the whole EU territory. Such a protection regime provides flexible implementation of measures suited to the specific needs and occurrences of a species, without imposing unnecessary broad scale management restrictions. All the existing populations of the Annex IV species are strictly protected in the whole German territory (132 species, including certain bats and amphibians) and the whole EU territory (950 species). There are exemptions from strict protection in certain cases. However, preconditions for derogation from the Annex IV restrictions include that one of the exception rules of the Directive can be applied, lack of a satisfactory alternative, and that the conservation status of the affected populations will not deteriorate.

Some plant species, such as arnica have traditionally been used for medication or other purposes. Such species are listed in Annex V of the Habitats Directive. Continued sustainable use of these species is granted when, for example, the use does not endanger population size and, thus long-term sustainable yield. There are approximately 200 Annex V species in the EU, 87 of these species are found in Germany. Apart from the Natura 2000 network, species protection outside reserves is the second pillar of the EU conservation agenda. What has to be done and what is permissible, will only be applied where the species is present, and will be based on the actual needs of the particular species. The European approach to species protection is thus target oriented, and at the same time flexible in actual implementation.

According to the Habitats Directive, specific reserves are to be established in order to preserve Annex II species. In the case of the bats, protection of summer roosts is particularly important. Greater mouse-eared bats (above) roost in the attics of larger buildings. This explains why the City Hall in Höxter/Westfalia (left), harbouring approximately 100 animals, has become a Natura 2000 site.



Photos: F. Grawe

Arnica is characteristic of Nardus grasslands. For humans it serves as an important medical plant.

Photo: P. Leopold





Early and comprehensive information of stakeholders and land users, like in the “Wälder bei Beverungen” Natura 2000 site (Federal State of Northrhine-Westfalia), is conducive to the implementation of Natura 2000 management plans

Photo: F. Grawe

CORPORATIONS NEED MANAGEMENT – FLEXIBILITY IS KEY TO SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

Successful corporations need management! The preservation of our European natural heritage can not be accomplished without management. Management defines conservation objectives, measures to achieve these objectives and mechanisms to assess the success of implementation. As a basic goal, transmission of the proposed list of Natura 2000 sites to the European Commission implies maintenance or improvement of conservation status in these prospective Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's). Actual ways and means to achieve this goal have to be individually defined on site for each SAC.

Integrated management plans help reconcile user demand and nature conservation. Land use in accordance with the nature conservation objectives will be decisive for most of the protected habitat types and species within Natura 2000 sites. It is therefore important that land owners and land users are integrated into the planning process early on! Based on mutual agreement, the implementation of maintenance and restoration measures then can be integrated in a target oriented way, considering the operational needs and requirements of participating farms and forestry companies.

Natura 2000 – succeeds together with the people and for the people!



Shepherds are important partners for nature conservation when it comes to the maintenance of semi-dry calcareous grasslands. Sheep function as living transport system in ecological networks. They carry seeds and fruits in their woolly coats. Migratory herding of sheep thus provides an outstanding linkage between different sites and habitat types.

Photo: F. Grawe



The "Kaiserstuhl," an old cultural landscape in the Federal State of Baden-Württemberg, is famous well beyond Germany for viticulture and extended dry calcareous grasslands (Habitat Type 6210). It is also one of the most outstanding tourist destinations in southwestern Germany.

Photo: B. Beinlich

NO CORPORATION FUNCTIONS WELL WITHOUT A BUSINESS REPORT

Corporations can not be managed without regular business reports. Similarly, the implementation of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive legally requires monitoring and reporting. Reports need to cover conservation status of species and habitats and the implementation of conservation measures. They must not only address means and measures. Rather, these reports must also assess actual success! Success does not simply correspond to the number of reserves delineated or to the number of ordinances passed. Success is linked to achievements made on the conservation status of species and habitat types. A publicly available report to the EU Commission is due every 3 years for the Birds Directive and every 6 years for the Habitats Directive (Art. 17). The EU Commission assembles and analyses the reports of the member states, and then produces its

summary report on the state of biodiversity within the territory of the European Union.

In order for the above mentioned reports to be comparable, EU-wide rules for the assessment of conservation status incorporate the traffic light example: green indicates favourable, yellow indicates unfavourable/inadequate and red indicates unfavourable/bad conservation status. Separate evaluations are provided for every habitat type and species listed in the annexes of the Directives. The reference areas are the different biogeographic regions. The second German national report (reporting period 2001 – 2006) was presented to the EU Commission in Brussels at the end of 2007 (www.bfn.de/0316_bericht2007.html).



Rivers and streams with floating vegetation (Habitat type 3260) are protected under the Habitats Directive (flowering aspect of the white water-buttercup, Osterau River, Federal State of Schleswig-Holstein).

Photo: H.-J. Augst

NATURA 2000 IS NOT FOR FREE

The protection of nature for future generations is not for free! Rather, it requires continued work to be primarily financed through public funds. The European Union estimates funding requirements for the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives within the EU territory at 6.1 Billion Euro each year. This includes costs related to the establishment of the Natura 2000 network, management of these reserves, measures to maintain or improve conservation status of protected habitat types and species, and monitoring for success. Also included are costs for environmental education and nature experiences. A crude assessment estimates the cost to be borne by Germany at 620 Million Euro each year. Considering the benefits we will enjoy by preserving our natural heritage, this expense is modest, especially when compared to the total volume of public budgets.

Who bears the cost?

It is the task of the individual EU member States to provide funding for Natura 2000. However, member States are supported by EU co-financing. EU funds are provided through EU budgets allocated to rural and regional development. In order to use the EU funds, in Germany, the Federal States have to develop implementation programs which are subsequently approved by the EU Commission. In addition, some of the Federal States have developed programs that do not require EU co-financing. Agri-environment programs and conservation contracts have proved to be suitable instruments for fostering conformity between nature conservation and land use, and, thus, for fostering the preservation of biological diversity. Services provided by farmers and foresters, fisherman and landscape maintenance crews are paid for through programs designed to protect flora, fauna, biotopes and cultural landscapes.

The stag beetle (Annex II), our largest native beetle, depends on old growth oak trees exposed to the sun for their larvae to successfully develop.

Photo: F. Grawe



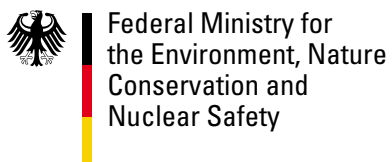
EU-funds potentially available for co-financing the Natura 2000 network. The implementation of the funding opportunities given in the table depends on specific eligibility criteria and matching programs in the Federal States.

Abbreviation and administrative code of Directive	Full Title
EAFRD 1698 / 2005	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EFF 1198 / 2006	European Fisheries Fund
ESF 1081 / 2006	European Social Fund
ERDF 1080 / 2006	European Regional Development Fund
LIFE+ 614 / 2007	financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects
FP7	7. Framework Program for research



The kingfisher is a species that characterizes our streams (Annex I, Birds Directive). It breeds in self-made burrows along steep riparian banks characterized by erosion. Branches reaching above the water surface provide it perches for successful hunting of small fish.

Photo: M. Woike



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Federal Agency for
Nature Conservation

contact:
Bundesamt für Naturschutz
Konstantinstraße 110
53179 Bonn
Telefon: 02 28 84 91-2 80
Telefax: 02 28 84 91-2 99
Internet: www.bfn.de
E-Mail: pbox-presse@bfn.de
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