

Roadmap to implementation of Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic - From the Global to the Regional Perspective

Transfer project in the framework of the Klaus Toepfer Fellowship Programme

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Executive Summary

The Habitats and Birds Directives (hereinafter “Directives”) are the cornerstone of the biodiversity policy in the European Union (EU). In accordance with the results of the “Fitness check”¹, the current focus of the European Commission (hereinafter “Commission”) is on the implementation of the Directives, *inter alia* implementation of the conservation measures, in order to achieve their objectives, i.e. a favourable conservation status of the target features.

The Ministry of the Environment (MoE) is the responsible body for the implementation of the Directives in the Czech Republic. The MoE delegates some of its responsibilities to the nature protection authorities on lower levels, such as the regional authorities. They implement the conservation measures for the sites in practice. The effectiveness and efficiency of the current rate of the implementation is in need of strengthening. A contributing factor to the current situation is a limited communication between the MoE and the regional authorities, resulting in diverse approaches of the implementation and lack of elaborate strategic planning regarding the implementation.

This project addressed the lack of communication between the MoE and the regional authorities that stems from *inter alia* the lack of methodological guidance and information documents that would enable regional authorities to understand their crucial role in achieving the objectives of the Directives. The newly gained knowledge could strengthen their willingness to participate in the strategic planning of the implementation. This would significantly contribute to the effective and efficient implementation of the Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic, the goal of this project.

In the framework of the project I produced a comprehensive draft publication providing overall information about the implementation of the Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic. Such publication has not existed before this project. On 48 pages, the publication describes *inter alia* the transposition of the Directives into national law and the history of Natura 2000 sites designation and conservation. It will serve as a knowledge basis for the regular communication between the MoE and the regional authorities.

Due to a delay in carrying out several activities, I did not meet the final objective of the project within its timeframe. The objective was contingent on the submission of the publication for a revision, its finalization and distribution to the regional authorities.

¹ A comprehensive policy evaluation assessing whether the Directives are “fit for purpose”, i.e. achieving their objectives.

Nevertheless, I intend to fulfil these activities after the project and discuss the topics of the publication on regular meetings with the regional authorities in order to develop inputs to a new strategy of the implementation of the Natura 2000.

I did not collaborate with any partners during the implementation of the project. I had two mentors - Reinhard Schmidt-Moser and Alena Kubánková. As my activities were of narrow focus on Natura 2000, I did not draw on any expert lessons from the KTF modules. I used lessons focused on the skills of the visualisation, technical writing and strategic planning. I have learned how crucial it is to properly define the logic of the project in the proposal and create a detailed realistic work plan. It is worth investing the time in the project development. It will save time at last.