

NATURA 2000 « Part 2 »

Natura 2000 – Impact on ongoing activities?

Most Natura 2000 sites are privately owned and are host to numerous socio-economic activities that often contribute to biodiversity (agriculture, forestry, fish farming, tourism, leisure, fishing, hunting, recreational activities). Obviously these activities are possible in or near Natura 2000 sites. If adaptations or modifications to these uses are necessary, the feasibility of these proposals have to be negotiated with rural actors and financed.



(co-financing, stand still), the Steering Group on Natura 2000 financing (see guidance document on the Commission website), the Article 12-16 Working Group (strict liability, ecological and legal definitions), Biogeographical seminars, and other discussions focused on Article 17 (monitoring, annexes) and Article 10 (connectivity). ELO is also working on the interpretation of Natura 2000, which has also been increasing the constraints outside of Natura 2000 sites, as supported by the species protection approach of the Habitats Directive (wider countryside pillar). ELO is also leading a dedicated forum of EU federations of users also involved in Natura 2000 implementation and management, the Natura 2000 Users' Forum.

Natura 2000 – ELO involvement and action

ELO is closely following Natura 2000 as the management of assets and their value is closely dependant on the interpretation of these Directives and their implementation in the field. As has been stated, ELO clearly advocates for a balanced implementation of Natura 2000 and sound financing at the EU, national and local level. Clearly in some case Natura 2000 has not been adequately financed or implemented in the field, notably during the designation process or on occasions where there has been a ban or limitation of specific uses without compensation.

In the meantime, ELO also launched actions promoting Natura 2000 awareness among rural actors and demonstrating their positive contribution to Natura 2000, such as the Natura 2000 Networking Programme -NNP (in collaboration with Eurosite-Europarc), the “From Belgium to Europe with Natura 2000” campaign, and dedicated actions towards New Member States (CZ, PL, ROM...). ELO also punctually provides support to its members throughout the EU on Natura 2000 implementation, when it can lead to repeatable solutions across EU member states. ELO also promotes good implementation and management of sites through its Awards programme.

Therefore ELO actively participates in EU consultation processes aimed at interpreting specific articles of the Directives, such as the Article 8 Working Group

Promote Natura 2000, choose Cork!

Consumer choice matters, the perfect illustration of this is the Mediterranean Cork forest (Habitat 6310 *Quercus* spp, and 9330 *Quercus suber*). For centuries growing cork trees has demonstrated not only sustainable management by local communities but also its contribution towards biodiversity enhancement as these Habitats preserve rare flora (over 100 flowering plants) and fauna (over 135 species), maintain soil and water functions, increase carbon storage (over 14 million t/y), and alleviate desertification and forest fires. The cork oak has a lifespan of 170-200 years during which it will be stripped 15-18 times (every 9 years). The outer bark, stripped by hand with special axes, is used for stopper production but also in various high technology goods for its intrinsic qualities (building materials, cars, planes and even the space shuttle!). Choosing bottles with cork stoppers is therefore not only buying a product, but also helping the cork production chain to deliver environmental public goods: our biodiversity, the Mediterranean cultural landscape, notably the Portuguese Montado.

ELO, being part of the Cork Alliance is working towards raising an awareness campaign and actions in favour of cork.

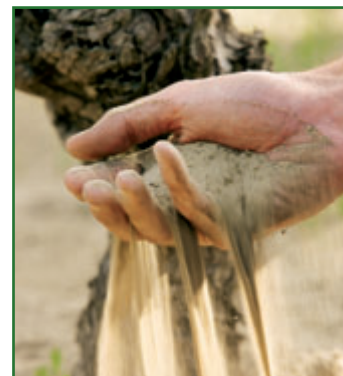
Birds Directive 79/409/EEC; Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and related information on the Commission dedicated “Nature” webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm

AWARDS FOR ENVIRONMENT

ELO, its sister organisation Friends of the Countryside, and their partners have created a series of European Awards in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas. These aim at rewarding innovative, environmentally friendly and entrepreneurial achievements in the European countryside.

✓ Anders WALL Award

Since 2002, the Anders WALL Foundation (Sweden), Friends of the Countryside, DG Environment and the Royal Agriculture Academy of Stockholm have been presenting an annual award to encourage and promote efforts made by creative entrepreneurs who have contributed to the creation of a “positive rural environment”: landscape preservation, biodiversity enhancement, cultural heritage conservation and contribution to the rural economy. The Anders WALL Award 2007 was presented to the Jarras-Listel estate, represented by Paul-François VRANKEN, who understood very early on the role of environmental protection combined with sustainable use of landscape for wine production on a relict sandbank from the Rhone river included in the Natura 2000 network. <http://www.friendsofthecountryside.net/award.htm>



✓ Belleuropa Award

The Belleuropa project, was launched in Italy in the late 1990's, thanks to the initiative of Giuseppe NATTA, a leading environmental figure, with the cooperation of ELO. Belleuropa is based on the principle that in much of Europe, the rural territory is highly degraded, and a quality environment is thus a scarce resource upon which much value is placed today. The Belleuropa Award is presented to a rural property, which thanks to agri-environmental measures has developed into an important example of Third Generation agricultural production, achieving significant results from an environmental point of view. In 2007, the Belleuropa Award was presented to les Salins du Midi (France).



✓ ELO Wetlands and Water Award

Previously known as the Euroducks International, the ELO Water and Habitat Fund created an award dedicated to the development of initiatives for the protection, conservation and sustainable management of water resources and water-based habitats by private land managers, companies or institutions. The latest Award was presented in 2004 by MEP Michl EBNER to Grupo Empresarial ARICAM (Spain) for the elaboration of a water-saving industrial process and the sustainable management of a quarry in a sensitive environmental area. <http://www.elo.org/index.php?page=pages/awards.php>



✓ Environment and Soil Management Award

Created by ELO, under the patronage of Commissioner DIMAS, with the cooperation of DG Environment, the Universities of Vienna and Ljubljana, the EU Joint Research Centre of Ispra and Syngenta International, the Environment and Soil Management Award recognizes outstanding management achievements contributing to the improvement of environmental quality and to the protection of soil and land. The 2007 award was given to Eugénio SEQUEIRA, President of the Liga para a Protecção da Natureza for its outstanding contribution to soil recovery in a rural threatened ecosystem in Portugal <http://www.elo.org/index.php?page=pages/soil.php>

