



Natura 2000  
Networking  
Programme on behalf  
of the European  
Commission



Green Balkans



Central Balkan  
National Park

Natura 2000 Networking Programme  
managed in partnership by project partners  
EUOPARC Federation, Eurosite and  
European Landowners Organization (ELO)

## **Natura 2000 Networking Programme (NNP)**

### **Seminar Report**

#### **“Natura 2000 in Bulgaria – Goals, Opportunities and Challenges”**

**30 October 2007 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria**

#### **a. Introduction / Background**

The awareness raising NNP seminar on NATURA 2000 was carried out in Bulgaria with the support from the EUOPARC Federation and the Natura 2000 Networking Programme, which is managed in partnership by project partners EUOPARC Federation, Eurosite and European Landowners Organization (ELO).

The event was entitled "NATURA 2000 in Bulgaria - goals, opportunities, and challenges". It was organized by Green Balkans, the Federation of Nature Conservation NGOs, and the "Central Balkan" National Park Directorate and held on October 30th, 2007 in Plovdiv.

The meeting was intended for representatives of various sector organizations related to agriculture and forestry, forest management associations, producers of organic products, representatives of the Association of Municipalities and municipal ecologists.

For the past years many efforts have been made (mainly by NGOs) to acquaint the public with NATURA 2000 goals and purpose, including lots of meetings with various target groups -municipal and district administrations, hunters, media, etc. However, there is a pressing need for more efforts in this field. For example, so far there has not yet been a specific meeting intended for associations of land and forest owners and sector organizations related to agriculture and forestry. Lack of information was the reason for their negative and reserved attitude towards NATURA 2000. Therefore, we focused on this target group. Some 80 representatives of various organizations were invited to take part in the event: associations of land and forest owners and sector organizations related to agriculture and forestry, Association of Municipalities and municipal ecologists. The purpose of this meeting was acquainting key stakeholders with the goals and objectives of NATURA 2000, providing information on the envisaged compensatory measures and subsidies for activities within NATURA 2000 sites, motivating public participation in the establishment of the ecological network, and demonstrating successful practices for sustainable forest management ("Borika" Forestry Cooperation, Stoykite village).

The event was attended by more than 55 participants, representing forestry associations, municipalities, National Farmers' Union, Bulgarian Forestry Chamber, Rice-producers' Union, Agronomists' Union, scientific institutes of fruit-growing, the Institute of Plant Resources, NGOs, regional structures of the Ministry of Environment and Waters, and representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply. The meeting was facilitated by the Natura 2000 Ambassadors Elena Tilova (Green Balkans) and Anton Stanchev ("Central Balkan" National Park Directorate).

Representatives from the Ministry for Agriculture and Forests, the Ministry for the Environment and Waters, NGOs, the "Central Balkan" National Park Directorate, the "Borika" Forestry Cooperation, et al. were lecturers at the event.

## **b. Purpose of Workshop & Expected Outcomes**

The agenda involved various presentations, providing the target groups with information. At the beginning of the meeting, Simeon Marin, leader of Green Balkans' project on NATURA 2000, presented the status of the network in Europe. The related legal arrangements in the country were presented by Anton Stanchev -NATURA 2000 Ambassador and representative of "Central Balkan" National Park Directorate. This was followed by a presentation made by an official of the Ministry of Environment and Waters -the institution legally responsible for NATURA 2000 in Bulgaria. The participants were acquainted with the progress made on the establishment of the network, as well as with potential restrictions and the appropriate management of NATURA 2000.

The presentation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply acquainted the participants with the developed compensatory measures for activities within NATURA 2000 sites.

The second part of the meeting was focused on some publications and practices related to NATURA 2000. The specialist representing the Parks' Association presented the "Manual for Planning of Activities within NATURA 2000 Lands and Forests" being developed at the moment, and, in his capacity of a specialist in forestry, he answered questions related to forest management. The representative of WWF-DCP/Bulgaria presented the forest certification principles as an example of a successful forest management practice. Pilot project for forest certification of "Borika" Forestry Cooperation was also presented. At the end of the meeting, the participants were acquainted with the preparation of a manual for development of management plans for protected sites. The presentation was made by Stoyan Yotov ("Borrowed Nature" NGO). He also presented the pilot development of a management plan for "Pojarevo-Garvan" Protected Site, which is apart of a project implemented by Green Balkans and Borrowed Nature.

Besides those delivering presentations, lecturers at the event also were experts that had been involved in the identification of potential NATURA 2000 sites -the leader and the co-ordinator of Green Balkans' project, experts in field studies, as well as a GIS expert. There were open "Questions and Answers" sessions, during which the participants could ask the lecturers various questions. The discussions continued informally during the coffee-breaks, too.

Please also see the following seminar programme:

## Agenda

### **Monday, 29.10.2007**

16:00 – 19:00	<b>Arrival and accommodation of participants</b>
19:30	<b>Dinner</b>
<b>Tuesday, 30.10.2007</b>	
08:00	<b>Registration of participants</b>
08:30	<b>Opening of the event. Objectives of the seminar.</b> <i>Ms. Elena Tilova, Green Balkans Federation of Nature Conservation NGOs</i> <i>Mr. Anton Stanchev, “Central Balkan” National Park Directorate</i>
08:45	<b>Introduction of participants</b>
09:00	<b>NATURA 2000 – purpose and objectives of the ecological network</b> <i>Simeon Marin - Green Balkans</i>
09:30	<b>NATURA 2000 and the Bulgarian legislation</b> <i>Mr. Anton Stanchev</i>
10:00	<b>NATURA 2000 – current situation in Bulgaria</b> <i>Mr. Nikolay Nedyalkov, Ministry of Environment and Waters</i>
10:30	<i>Coffee-break</i>
11:00	<b>NATURA 2000 in the region</b> <i>Lecturer from the Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Waters in Pazardjik, Plovdiv, and Smolyan</i>
11:30	<b>Open session</b> <b>Questions and Answers</b>
12:00	<b>Lunch</b>
13:00	<b>Development of a Manual for Planning of Activities in forests and areas within NATURA 2000 sites</b> <i>Mrs. Dobromira Dimova, Bulgaria’s Park Association</i>
13:30	<b>Open session</b> <b>Questions and Answers</b>
13:45	<b>Regimes and management of SPAs and SCIs</b> <i>Mr. Nikolay Nedyalkov - Ministry of Environment and Waters and the NGOs</i>
14:15	<b>Open session</b> <b>Questions and Answers</b>
14:30	<b>Development of a Manual for Planning the Management of a NATURA 2000 site in Bulgaria – “Building capacities for development of Management Plans for NATURA 2000 sites in Bulgaria”</b> <i>Mr. Stoyan Yotov, “Borrowed Nature” Association</i>
15:00	<i>Coffee-break</i>
15:20	<b>Compensatory measures under NATURA 2000 in Bulgaria (agricultural lands and forests)</b> <i>Mrs. Vesela Ignatova - Ministry of Agriculture and Forests</i>
15:50	<b>Open session</b> <b>Questions and Answers</b>
16:00	<b>Cooperation under NATURA 2000 – development of a pilot Management Plan for “Pojarevo-Garvan” Protected Site</b> <i>Mr. Mladen Angelov – Green Balkans</i>
16:30	<b>Open session</b> <b>Questions and Answers</b>
16:40	<b>Certification of timber</b> <i>Mr. Jivko Bogdanov, WWF Danube-Carpathian Program, Bulgaria</i>
17:10	<b>Final comments</b> Заклучителни коментари
17:20	<b>Summary and conclusions</b>

The provisional agenda foresaw for an excursion to the "Borika" Forestry Cooperation. However, there were very few registrations for the excursion as most of the participants were from the Western Rhodope region and decided that they could get themselves acquainted with the Cooperation's work during other visits to this area. The seminar team decided the benefits of the excursion would not justify its costs and therefore cancelled the trip

### **c. Results - key points arising during the workshop**

The main topics of interest for the participants were related to the potential restrictions, regime and management of protected sites. The representatives of the responsible institutions – Ministry of Environment and Waters and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply, answered these questions. The lecturers put a special emphasis on the opportunities provided by the Bulgarian legislation for public involvement and participation in the identification and management of NATURA 2000 sites.

Also, the presentation on the possible funding opportunities related to NATURA 2000 (agri-environmental measures, etc.) stirred up deep interest among the participants. Many of the questions asked by the participants were answered during the open Q&A sessions.

### **d. Conclusions and further action**

The participants filled in a form to evaluate the seminar. In general, the feedback in the forms is very good, evaluating the provided information as very useful and the organization as good. As major benefit from this meeting the participants have indicated the opportunity to raise their awareness of NATURA 2000, and, respectively, the dispelled fears related to any possible restrictions.

Should the project budget allow for this, the Natura 2000 Ambassador team in Bulgaria would like to produce a video clip about NATURA 2000, to be broadcast on the regional cable TV channels. A video clip was considered to be the most efficient way to popularize NATURA 2000 as for the ratio "spent funds"- "impact on the target group". The feasibility of such endeavour will be assessed at a later stage.

### **e. Contact details of workshop host**

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#### **f. Contact details of workshop participants**

See attached in Annexe 1 a scanned version of the participants list.

#### **g. Relevant background papers**

Every participant received a folder containing handouts and useful materials. Besides the brochure "Questions and answers about NATURA 2000" published for this particular event, the folders contained other information brochures about NATURA 2000, certification-related materials, as well as the presentations of the meeting.

The materials were also distributed to people, who for one reason or another could not attend the event, but who expressed their willingness to get themselves acquainted with the information presented at the meeting.

A relevant source of background information for participants is also the following website: [www.natura2000bg.org](http://www.natura2000bg.org). It is run by Green Balkans and a useful source for those who wish to learn more about Natura 2000 implementation in Bulgaria.

Elena Tilova  
Green Balkans NGO  
7 November 2007

#### **Annexes**

Annexe 1: Participants list

Annexe 2: Promotion of NNP seminar and Natura 2000 issues at [www.greenbalkans.org](http://www.greenbalkans.org)

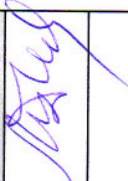





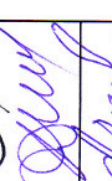

Списък на участниците в семира "НАТУРА 2000 в България - цели, възможности и предизвикателства"

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## Annexe 1



Списък на участниците в семира "НАТУРА 2000 в България - цели, възможности и предизвикателства"

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Списък на участниците в семира "НАТУРА 2000 в България - цели, възможности и предизвикателства"

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Списък на участниците в семира "НАТУРА 2000 в България - цели, възможности и предизвикателства"

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## Natura 2000 Networking Programme (NNP) – Conference news release on-line









Text in news release at [http://www.greenbalkans.org/index\\_en.html#n250](http://www.greenbalkans.org/index_en.html#n250):  
**“NATURA 2000 in Bulgaria – Goals, Opportunities, and Challenges”**

Seminar entitled “NATURA 2000 in Bulgaria – goals, opportunities, and challenges” was held on October 30th, 2007 in Plovdiv. The event was organized by Green Balkans Federation of Nature Conservation NGOs and “Central Balkan” National Park Directorate. The seminar was attended by some 60 representatives of various organizations and associations of land and forest owners, including 15 forestry associations from the Western Rhodope region, sector organizations related to land and forest management, etc.



The purpose of the meeting was raising the awareness of this important target group of the purpose of NATURA 2000 and encouraging public participation in the establishment and management of the ecological network. Representatives of NGOs, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply, and the Ministry of Environment and Waters were lecturers at the event. The information provided to the participants was focused on the legal arrangements and regulations of NATURA 2000 in Bulgaria, possible restrictions and management of protected areas, funding opportunities for activities within NATURA 2000 sites, forest certification, and development of management plans. Several publications being developed at the moment, as well as some examples of successful practices, were also presented to the audience.

The seminar was organized with the financial support of EUROPARC as a part of the networking initiative related to NATURA 2000, implemented by EUROPARC, EUROSITE, and ELO with the assistance of the European Commission. Anton Stanchev (“Central Balkan” National Park Directorate) and Elena Tilova (Green Balkans NGO) took part in the event as NATURA 2000 Ambassadors.

## Natura 2000 – General information at [www.greenbalkans.org](http://www.greenbalkans.org)

GREEN BALKANS - federation of nature-conservation NGOs - Mozilla Firefox

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http://www.greenbalkans.org/natura2000\_en.html

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**Our work**

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  - Forests and mountains
  - Species and habitats
  - Protected areas
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  - Nature-conservation policy
  - Capacity development
- Habitat restoration
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- Public campaigns
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  - Illegal hunting
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- Voluntary forest protection system
- Nature conservation working holidays
- Youth programs
  - Nature conservation actions

**NATURA 2000**

Natura 2000 is a pan European network of protected areas subject to conservation, in order to provide the long-term preservation of the most valuable species and habitats important for the Community.

This network has to be established in all EU Member States and is one of the accession requirements. Establishing the network is supposed to balance the conservation of species and habitats and the human activities around them.



Establishing Natura 2000 is based on two major EU directives related to nature and biodiversity conservation. These are the Birds Directive and the Habitat Directive. Subject to conservation under the scope of the directive are some 140 habitats and more than 600 different plant and animal species considered of high importance for the European Community.

The major requirements of the two Directives are reflected in the Bulgarian legislation with the Biodiversity Act adopted by the Parliament in August 2002. According to it, in Bulgaria will be created the so called "protected areas", which

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**Text in Natura 2000 section at [http://www.greenbalkans.org/natura2000\\_en.html](http://www.greenbalkans.org/natura2000_en.html)**  
**NATURA 2000**

Natura 2000 is a pan European network of protected areas subject to conservation, in order to provide the long-term preservation of the most valuable species and habitats important for the Community.

This network has to be established in all EU Member States and is one of the accession requirements. Establishing the network is supposed to balance the conservation of species and habitats and the human activities around them.



Establishing Natura 2000 is based on two major EU directives related to nature and biodiversity conservation. These are the Birds Directive and the Habitat Directive. Subject to conservation under the scope of the directive are some 140 habitats and more than 600 different plant and animal species considered of high importance for the European Community.

The major requirements of the two Directives are reflected in the Bulgarian legislation with the Biodiversity Act adopted by the Parliament in August 2002. According to it, in Bulgaria will be created the so called “protected areas”, which will be part of the “national ecological network”. These “protected areas” are sites from the Bulgarian territory that match the requirements for habitats and species availability, listed in the Annexes to the Birds Directive and the Habitat Directive.



Green Balkans is Bulgaria's leading nongovernmental organization in the establishment of the Natura 2000 European Ecological Network.

The organization is a primary partner assisting the Ministry of Environment and Waters in fulfilling the commitments undertaken before the EU, concerning the establishment of the network.

### Green Balkans' involvement in the establishment of Natura 2000 in Bulgaria

According to the Bulgarian Biodiversity Act, the [Ministry of Environment and Waters](#) is the institution responsible for the establishment of Natura 2000 in Bulgaria.

Project entitled "Conservation of habitats and species in Bulgaria: approximation to the EU", funded by the DANCEE program of the Danish Ministry of Environment, was launched on October 1st, 2002, aimed at assisting the National Nature Protection Service of the Ministry of Environment and Waters in creating the Natura 2000 network in Bulgaria. By December 2004 more than 310 potential Natura 2000 sites were identified. Ecological data required in the Natura 2000 standard data forms was collected, partially or completely, for 129 of them.

Green Balkans was represented in the project implementation by 11 field experts in ornithology, malacology, and ichthyology, as well as more than 20 volunteers, who studied and filled the standard field and digital data forms for 33 sites, covering a total area of 459,242, 4,634 ha.

A natural continuation of the work in creating the European Ecological Network in Bulgaria was Green Balkans' project ["Establishing the Natura 2000 network of protected areas in Bulgaria"](#), funded by EMEPA /Enterprise for Management of Environment Protection Activities/.

The project is intended to fulfill the commitments undertaken by Bulgaria for the establishment of Natura 2000 and to prepare the needed documentation as required by the European Commission for potential protected areas in the country that are valuable for the European Community.



In 2005, as a part of the project, great volume of field work was completed (more than 3,200 man days) involving more than 100 experts in 244 potential protected sites. More than 2,000 man-days were invested in filling the Natura 2000 documents and forms and preparing maps. The borders were specified and the ownership and use of the lands was described in 130 potential Natura 2000 sites. Evaluations were made for the national coverage of 29 forest habitats.

In 2006 the work on the project continued and the full documentation of more than 300 potential Natura 2000 sites was submitted to the MoEW.