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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

GROUP OF EXPERTS ON PROTECTED AREAS AND ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS

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**TOWARDS MANAGEMENT OF EMERALD SITES:
GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Recommendation No. 16 (1989) of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention sets the rules for establishing of the Emerald network. It recommends that Contracting Parties take steps to designate the Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCI) and to ensure that necessary and appropriate conservation measures are taken for each Area. This calls for an appropriate conservation regime, designed to achieve the conservation of the nature values of the ASCIs. An appropriate ecological and other research should be also conducted, in a properly co-ordinated fashion, to improve the understanding of the critical elements in the management of these Areas. Monitoring of the status of the nature values giving rise to the site designation and conservation should be also properly planned.

A later reference document, Resolution No. 8 (2012) of the Standing Committee to the Berne Convention, provides more precise requirements stipulating that parties should ensure that all Emerald sites are protected from external threats and are subject to an appropriate regime for achieving a satisfactory conservation status of the species and natural habitats listed in Resolutions No. 4 (1996) and No. 6 (1998) present on the site, involving, if and where appropriate, management plans, administrative measures and contractual measures. In order to facilitate the assessment of the achievement of the site conservation, it also calls for specific short and long-term site objectives for the management of Emerald sites to be drawn up, in compliance with the national/regional conservation objectives of the country. National, regional and local stakeholders should be involved, if and where appropriate, in the planning of the management of the sites, as well as in the implementation of the conservation and protection measures foreseen, and in the monitoring of the sites' management.

Thus, the Bern Convention Contracting Parties and Observer states are recommended to take the following steps in respect of ASCIs:

- draw up and implement management measures which will identify both short- and long-term objectives;
- regularly review the terms of the management measures in the light of changing conditions or of increased scientific knowledge.

Recommendation No. 16 (1989) also recognises that the building the Emerald Network is a dynamic process, which will need regular updates in line with the newest scientific information.

Up to date, the designation of Emerald sites and the planning of site management are generally defined. It is up to Contracting Parties and Observer states to decide on ways to implement the provisions of the Convention's Recommendations and Resolutions. Therefore, the purpose of this document is to provide guidance to Contracting Parties and Observer states in interpreting the general provisions of these Resolutions and Recommendations and in their efforts to establish conservation measures for the Emerald sites (ASCIs) on their territories. The document should be read in conjunction with the aforementioned legal documents, particularly those related to Phases I and II of the Emerald network establishment.

2. BACKGROUND

Paragraphs 3a and 4a of Recommendation No. 16 (1989) on Areas of Special Conservation Interest recommend that Contracting Parties and Observer states ensure that the ASCIs are the subject of an appropriate regime, designed to achieve the conservation of the area, and that they have to draw up and implement the management measures for each site. Also Resolution No. 8 (2012) states that participating countries have the obligation to report every 6 years on the progress achieved in ensuring favourable conservation status of 'Emerald species and habitats' [(i.e. those listed in Resolutions No. 4 (1996) and No. 6 (1998)]. Although the Emerald Network was created by virtue of Recommendation No. 16 (1989) and Resolution No. 3 (1996) and thus benefits from the "soft law" approach characteristic of Recommendations and Resolutions, the obligations to protect the habitats of species and endangered natural habitats (where the creation of the Emerald network is one of necessary actions) are not "soft law" but rather strict obligations clearly marked in the Convention, and forming part of international law.

To ensure the implementation of these requirements, national authorities have started thinking about the appropriate management measures for their Emerald sites, although the scientific work leading to the sites identification and designation (Phase I) and to the sufficiency assessment (Phase II) is not

finalised yet. At the same time, there have been some misinterpretations in relation to the future responsibilities of Contracting Parties and Observer states related to the management of the Emerald sites. In particular, some countries link too closely together the site identification and designation process (present concern) with site management issues (to be solved in future). Such strategies create a risk of important delays in the Network constitution process and are an important barrier towards the creation of a coherent ecological network. The need to clarify the role and significance of the ASCI's management planning in the context of Phases I, II and III of the Emerald constitution process appeared necessary in the light of the practical implementation experience of the last few years. This guiding document is trying to help establishing a clear sequence of events and actions towards a completed site network and to set priorities for each Emerald Network constitution Phase. It targets national authorities in Contracting Parties and Observer states working on the Network establishment, but can be useful to all stakeholders and practitioners involved in this process.

3. TERMINOLOGY: WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'MANAGEMENT'?

In the past years, 'management of Emerald sites' has been discussed on many occasions. It should be noted, however, that different stakeholders interpret this term (i.e., 'management of Emerald sites') in various ways. For conservation authorities, this term concerns more the protection and surveillance of Emerald sites, as well as the financial background. For the general public, the management of the sites is most usually associated to the provision of the ecosystem services and understanding the benefits from the nature conservation. Biologists and conservationists would perhaps understand the protected area management as active measures to improve the status of protected habitats and species. Given this uncertainty, it is important to clarify the meaning of 'management' in the context of aims of the Bern Convention.

The overarching objective of the Emerald Network is the long term survival of the species and habitats of the Bern Convention requiring specific site protection measures [(i.e. those listed in Resolutions No. 4 (1996) and No. 6 (1998)]. In this context, 'Emerald site management' primarily means implementation of the necessary conservation measures, either active or passive, to maintain or increase populations of species or quality and area of habitats. All other aspects of Emerald site 'management' are also important, but they all must be aligned and adjusted to this primary objective. Thus, in this guiding document we restrict the meaning of "Emerald management" to these *conservation measures*, a term, which has been already introduced in Emerald documentation since the Recommendation No. 25 (1991) of the Standing Committee. *Conservation measures* is also a term which is constantly used by the European Commission in its guiding documents (notes) about the Natura 2000 Network in the European Union countries. *Conservation measures* can be defined as the actual mechanisms and actions to be put in place for an Emerald site with the aim of achieving the site's conservation objectives.

Other aspects than *conservation measures* in 'Emerald site management' are the competence of national authorities and neither the Bern Convention Secretariat, nor the European Commission (in the case of the Natura 2000 network), are directly involved in controlling these processes.

4. EMERALD AND SYSTEMATIC CONSERVATION PLANNING

The constitution of the Emerald network is a systematic process with clear roles for national conservation authorities, relevant stakeholders (scientists, NGOs, etc.) and the Secretariat to the Bern Convention. This process consists of three Phases of implementation:

- Phase I: Participating countries identify species and habitats to be protected according to the relevant resolutions of the Bern Convention. They subsequently propose sites (Areas of Special Conservation Interest, ASCIs) which are suitable for ensuring the long-term survival of these species and habitats. Countries send a database containing scientific information on the proposed sites to the Bern Convention's Secretariat.
- Phase II: An evaluation of the sufficiency of the proposed sites is done on a species by species and habitat by habitat level for each bio-geographical region. If designations for some species and habitats are deemed insufficient, additional sites may be required (see Recommendation 157 (2011)).

- Phase III: National designation of ASCI's and the implementation of the necessary conservation measures (management) and monitoring of 'Emerald' species and habitats occurring in the site.

In this context, the Emerald site selection process must be clearly separated from the site management planning process. During the site selection and evaluation (Phases I-II), only *scientific arguments* are taken into account, while in the Phase III also other aspects, such as socio-economic, could be taken on-board while discussing the site management issues.

The Standing Committee to the Bern Convention holds a "mandate" to guarantee that the sites selected for the Network on the territory of each contributing country are sufficient to ensure its objectives. If this is not the case, the Standing Committee, with the support of the Secretariat, can recommend to a given Contracting Party or Observer state to designate more areas for the Network. In this sense, it appears objectionable that areas hosting endangered species of Resolution No. 6 (1998) and/or habitats of Resolution No. 4 (1996) are not proposed by the national authorities during the site selection Phase I, due to difficulties foreseen in ensuring appropriate conservation measures for this site in the future.

To bring a parallel with the history of establishing Natura 2000 network, we could view the Emerald site (ASCI) designation process in the light of similar stages in Natura 2000 process. Proposed Emerald sites (under Phase I) and officially nominated candidate Emerald sites (Phase II) correspond to the Sites of Community Interest (SCI) in Natura 2000, while adopted Emerald sites with conservation measures in place (under Phase III) would correspond to the Special Areas for Conservation (SAC) in Natura 2000.

Figure A below depicts the Emerald site establishment and subsequent processes of planning and implementation of site management, with a particular emphasis on the sequence of events and the cyclic nature of the site management after the site is designated and described.

The preparation of a 'Management plan' (in Phase III) is a stage when the whole range of different management aspects of an Emerald site is taken into account, involving all relevant stakeholders. Phase III actually welcomes the integration of the conservation interests in a broader multi-sectoral planning. Site management planning requires good preparation and information basis. Authorities need to know what (species, habitats), where (mapping) and how (management methods, intensity, frequency) they need to manage. It might take years to complete all the necessary inventories and analyses, in order to plan the management and secure appropriate funding for it.

By now (mid 2014) most of the participating Bern Convention Contracting Parties and Observer states are still in the Phase I, i.e., in the site designation phase before the first bio-geographical assessment. Therefore, Emerald site management planning is a relatively distant future for most countries. Only few countries, such as Norway, Switzerland and the West Balkan Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia), could actually start thinking towards the Phase III for those Emerald sites which have already been assessed.

Figure A.

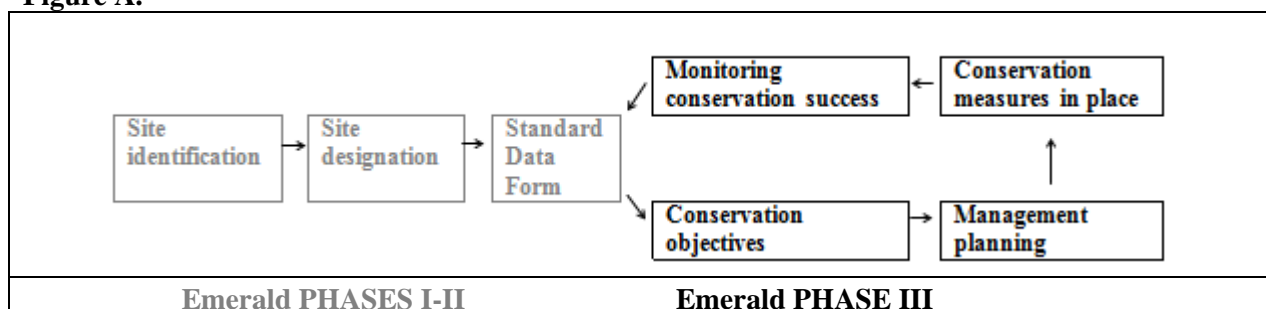


Figure A. Planned sequence of events from Emerald site selection and designation (Phase I) to implementation of site conservation measures and monitoring (Phase III). The site identification is a 'conservation rationale' based on a presence of species of Resolution No. 6 (1998) and habitats of Resolution No. 4 (1996). Setting and further reviewing conservation targets and management plans are seen as a continuous process, thus a repetitive review of Standard Data Forms, conservation objectives and management plans will further be a part of Phase III.

5. INITIAL DESIGNATION VERSUS ‘CONSERVATION MEASURES IN PLACE’

When looking at the Figure A, an important question raises on what form of protection is required from the Emerald site before Phase III. After the identification during Phase I, countries are responsible only for securing minimum conservation measures to prevent possible further deterioration of the site and its nature values. In most cases, this would mean securing that no new major development projects happen in the area, however, even such projects can be justified for the Phase III (i.e. during developing a management plan) if they are compatible with the maintenance of the species and habitats in the favourable conservation status.

The Secretariat of the Bern Convention is aware about the difficulties in some countries where the national legislation does not foresee such status (i.e. sites can have either no or full protection under some national category of protected areas). Still, the experience with Natura 2000 shows that the aim to ‘reserve’ natural areas for actual inclusion in the network later can be reached in different ways, and country authorities should be innovative in seeking solutions.

In contrast to the minimum requirements during Emerald Phases I and II, the Phase III requires full protection of all nature values present at the site. However, sorting out the details and the needs for conservation action (inventories, setting targets, work with stakeholders etc.) takes time. In the European Union, Member States are given 6 years between the site designation and putting full site management system in place.

In order to make clear rules for the Emerald network, one may advise the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks under the Bern Convention, the Group holding a mandate to follow and guide the setting-up of the Network, to suggest a similar or extended deadline and propose it for formal adoption by the Standing Committee to the Convention. Contracting Parties and Observer states can be asked to have put in place a full management system in place up to 6 (or 10 years) after the official adoption of their Emerald sites.

6. STANDARD DATA FORM AND CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

In order to plan appropriate conservation measures, it is required to establish conservation objectives for each Emerald site. These measures should be linked to the species of Resolution No. 6 (1998) and the habitats of Resolution No. 4 (1996) present at the site. Site-level conservation objectives are a set of specified objectives to be met in a site in order to make sure that the site contributes in the best possible way to achieving favourable conservation status at the appropriate level (national or the regional level, taking into account the natural range of the respective species or habitats).

Some documents refer to short-term and long-term objectives. Although we recognise the importance of distinction between the most immediate achievable goals and larger tasks which cannot be possibly achieved in nearest time period (e.g. because often improving status of long-living species requires several generations), in this paper we shall talk about conservation objectives in general, with understanding that each conservation objective must be linked to a specific time period.

Conservation objectives should be based on the species and habitats listed in the Standard Data Form (SDF, a name of the form containing the site description in the Emerald database, see Figure B.1) which acts a legal dossier of a given site. The fact, that a species of Resolution No.6 (1998) or a habitat of Resolution No. 4 (1996) is listed in the SDF, means that the country holds a responsibility to maintain or restore them at the favourable conservation status in a given site, with the only exception concerning the features with insignificant (‘D’) occurrences.

According to the EU Habitats Directive, there is a series of conditions that define Favourable Conservation Status, with slight differences between species and habitats. In a nutshell this means an ideal situation for a species or a habitat which ensures their long-term survival. Other categories of conservation status assessment, such as unfavourable-bad and unfavourable-inadequate, actually measure the distance from such an ideal situation. As the favourable conservation status is the main aim of the Emerald network, the corresponding population size for species and habitat area for habitats can be set at least as a long-term conservation objective for a given site (Figure B.1).

Conservation objectives should be established by relevant experts and the following standards may be pertinent:

- be specific - relate to a particular interest feature (species or habitat type) and define the condition(s) required to satisfy the conservation objective (e.g., number of pairs, individuals etc.)
- be measurable and reportable - enabling monitoring to be undertaken to determine whether the conservation objectives are being met (e.g. select parameters that are possible to measure);
- be realistic - with a reasonable time-frame and resources; set achievable objectives (recognising carrying capacity of a particular site for certain species and ensuring that time-frame is realistic versus expected improvement);
- be consistent in approach - the structure of the conservation objectives should, as far as it is possible, be the same across all sites. For sites supporting the same interest feature, use similar attributes and targets to describe favourable condition;
- be comprehensive - the attributes and targets should cover the properties of the interest feature necessary to describe its condition as either favourable or unfavourable.

Figure B.1.

Standard Data Form (SDF) information				Conservation objective	Conservation measures
SDF table*	CODE	NAME	Current value*	Desired value	Description
SPECIES	A120	<i>Porzana parva</i>	3-5 p	3-5 p	Establish regular mowing (in 75 ha area) to prevent meadow overgrowing, but starting not before 1 July to avoid interfering with bird breeding period. Restoration (removing bushes) of 14 ha of continental meadows.
	A122	<i>Crex crex</i>	10 m	15 m	
	A151	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	20 m	30 m	
	A338	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	5-10 p	5-10 p	
HABITATS	E2.25**	Continental meadows	36 ha	50 ha	
	E3.4	Moist or wet eutropic and mesotrophic grassland	25 ha	25 ha	

* As in the new Emerald Standard Data Form, adopted in Dec. 2013 by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention

** Habitat E2.25 is used in the further example in the Figure B.2

Figure B.1: Development of conservation objectives and subsequent conservation measures for an imaginary Emerald site EM0000001, assuming that its Standard Data Form includes 4 species of Resolution No. 6 (1998) and 2 habitats of Resolution No. 4 (1996). Abbreviations: p – pairs, m – males. As it can be seen from the differences between the current and desired values, a priority is given to species A122 and A151 as well as to habitat E2.25, assuming that they are at least regionally most threatened species and that this particular site can best contribute to their conservation.

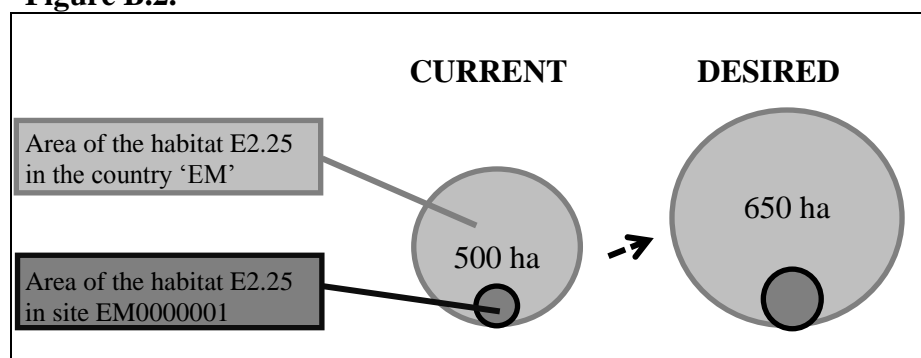
Figure B.2.

Figure B.2: Contribution of EM0000001 site-level conservation objectives to the country level (or biogeographical level) conservation objectives. As an example, if a country level conservation objective for the habitat E2.25 is set as 650 ha (instead of existing 500 ha), the site EM0000001 will contribute to this increase with additional 14 ha (see B.1). But also other sites are also expected to contribute with new areas with habitat E2.25.

The level of detail that can be provided when setting the conservation objectives for certain species or habitats may be constrained by the current limitations of scientific knowledge. In such circumstances, the overall objective on favourable conservation status can be applied in combination with site specific knowledge on the actual occurrence and distribution of the actual species or habitat. Site managers and landowners should have a good knowledge and understanding of the conservation objectives and the way they are expected to contribute to them. Communicating the site's

conservation objectives and its contribution to higher level conservation objectives should help improve awareness and commitment of local stakeholders.

The process of setting the objectives also helps to set priorities, because often not all conservation problems at the site (especially if it is a very large one) can be addressed at once. In more general sense a conservation objective is the specification of the target for the species and/or habitat types for which a site is designated in order to contribute to maintaining or reaching favourable conservation status of the same feature at the national, the bio-geographical or the European level. On the other hand, these overall objectives, if such exist, can be 'translated' into site-level conservation objectives, i.e. how much each site should contribute in reaching the overall objective (see Figure 2.B).

As said before, sometimes authorities will have to prioritise their conservation investments. Setting conservation priorities is a determination to take action towards the most important species/habitats by implementing the most important or urgent measures. Prioritization might be also needed as a tool not only due to financial constraints, but also because in certain conditions ecological requirements of different protected species can be opposite and not compatible in the same location. Also some dune habitats, for example, can continuously replace each other as a result of dynamic processes of the coast.

Thus, when establishing site-level priorities, a full regard must be given to:

- the ecological requirements of each species and habitats listed in the SDF;
- the local, regional, national conservation status of these habitats and species;
- the threats and degradation processes that species and habitat are exposed to;
- the overall coherence of the Emerald network.

Setting the site-level conservation objectives, planning the linked conservation measures, and an organising the evaluation of conservation success are internal/national responsibilities. To date this process is not formalised, i.e. there is no particular reporting on conservation objectives at the site-level envisaged. But continuous updating of Standard Data Forms (i.e. changes in species populations and habitat areas) will reflect the outcome of implemented conservation measures.

7. MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND CONSERVATION MEASURES

The necessary conservation measures in an Emerald site should be resulting from the conservation objectives of the site. Site-level conservation objectives define the desired condition or state of the species and habitats present on the site. Once the conservation objectives are defined for an Emerald site, there is some flexibility in defining and establishing the conservation measures, and possible alternatives can be considered also taking into account the socio-economic activities in the sites. This is usually done in the process of site management planning.

In the context of the Bern Convention, conservation measures for Emerald sites include a variety of actions such as habitat management, game and fisheries management (to control the exploitation of protected species so that it is compatible with maintaining their favourable conservation status), pollution prevention (e.g. to reduce eutrophication and habitat change) and regulation of recreation to prevent disturbance of wild species and habitats. These actions should contribute to reaching the site-level conservation objectives. It is, however, important to understand that in nature conservation not only active measures are considered as a management but also 'passive' measures (or non-intervention) such as leaving certain forest areas without human impact at all, or, for example, establishing no-take areas in fisheries. In fact, some management plans may consist only of non-intervention measures.

There is a wide range of nature and biodiversity management guidance already available, thus the aim of this guiding document is neither to suggest the best conservation measures for different species and habitats, nor to advise about the best approaches in developing management plans for Emerald sites.

Appendix I to Recommendation No. 25 (1991) of the Standing Committee already provides the guidance and lists examples of some possible measures. In addition, the Bern Convention has produced a number of Recommendations, Codes of conduct, guidance and action plans linked to specific species conservation, IAS management and human activities. It is a task of the site managers

to decide upon the most appropriate conservation measures, with appropriate timing, magnitude and intensity, and adjusted to the available financial resources and stakeholder involvement.

One may recognise that management plans are a useful tool for ensuring that the implementation of Resolution No. 8 (2012) provisions is done in a clear and transparent way, enabling all stakeholders to be informed about Emerald and engaging their active participation. Management planning process may also help identifying the funding for the measures and achieving better integration of nature conservation issues into other sectoral/development plans. Involving positive actions, such as agri-environmental or sylvi-environmental measures, serve as a good example to illustrate how socio-economic requirements can be taken into account when establishing agreements which benefit the Emerald sites.

Management plans can be stand-alone documents or they can also be integrated into other development plans. In the case of an integrated plan, it is important to ensure that clear targets and conservation measures are set for the relevant habitats and species present on the site and that nature conservation is not a 'second priority' in these documents. However, sometimes even in the case of stand-alone management plans, they might not be sufficient. For example, the existing management plan formats for some protected area categories, such as National or Nature Parks (etc.) are not always sufficient to address the conservation needs of all species and habitats in Emerald sites and should therefore be adapted to reflect the specific conservation objectives to be pursued in these sites.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF CONSERVATION TARGETS

All investments, including conservation measures, need monitoring in order to make sure whether the applied methods and approaches are bringing the desired results. Resolution No. 8 (2012) states that Convention Parties will ensure that a monitoring framework forms an integral part of the management plans and/or other administrative measures taken for the designation of Emerald sites. The monitoring of the site's management will comprise regular surveillance of the implementation of the conservation regime and of the conservation status of the species populations and natural habitats -in particular those listed in the Standing Committee's Resolutions No. 4 (1996) and No. 6 (1998), and/or of other factors giving rise to the designation of the area as specified in paragraph 1 of the Recommendation 16 (1989). Thus the regular surveillance of the conservation status of species and natural habitats for which the sites have been designated will comprise appropriate scientific and ecological research, aiming at identifying whether sites contribute to the long term survival of the species and habitats.

Monitoring activities in Emerald sites must be closely linked with the ongoing conservation measures, and thus linked with features (species and habitats) for which these conservation measures are implemented. The monitoring should have two purposes:

- to assess if and how the implemented conservation measures are leading towards reaching conservation objectives for the site;
- to assess the efficacy of employed conservation methods and approaches.

The first purpose of the monitoring is to provide an answer if current conservation measures are sufficient or if something has to be changed, either in methods or in some cases even conservation objectives. For example, referring to Figure B, monitoring of the site in that example should focus on obtaining data to be compared with the column 'Desired value' and thus the conservation objective would be a good indicator for itself. As discussed in the chapter above, the monitoring mechanisms should include measurable and simple indicators to facilitate their interpretation and evaluation of the results (e.g. pairs, calling males, individuals, hectares as in Figure B). Quantitative indicators would be preferred in most cases. Monitoring methods should be scientifically justified, and properly planned, applying the appropriate frequency, timing, effort, qualified staff, etc. It should be stressed, however, that monitoring of protected areas is not any longer a job for entirely professional staff. In many parts of the world, voluntary monitoring schemes (citizen science) are implemented with a great success. Of course, this method would not work for all the species and habitats, but it can be applied for some more common or easily recognised species and habitats. In such cases, chosen monitoring indicators should be relatively simple and some training is required for participants, but overall this brings an added value since the local stakeholders get closer involved in the protected area management and the whole exercise becomes more cost-effective.

The second monitoring purpose is equally important, and the results it provides are interesting not only for managers of a particular site but also to multiple other managers in a country and abroad. In this case, the assessment of the success in achieving particular conservation objectives must be linked with implemented management methods, their intensity, timing, longevity, and other factors. Very often such monitoring does not require any additional activity but only systematic recording of what, when and how was done in the area where the features of conservation interest (species and habitats) are located. For example, farmers could be asked to take records about the date and number of hectares mown in the imaginary site (Figure B). A wider reporting of an outcome of such monitoring (in the form of publications, technical reports etc.) is very important, as there is a huge potential to learn from best practices and not to repeat past mistakes. Unfortunately, the latter is possible only when negative experiences are also shared and this is not always the case.

Eventually, site monitoring results should be used in subsequent possible reviews of Standard Data Forms, conservation objectives, management plans and the monitoring system itself, as the site conservation is cyclic process (see Figure A).

9. CONCLUDING REMARKS (SUMMARY)

The management of ASCIs is very important for reaching the long-term conservation objectives of the Emerald Network, but it is not a priority issue for Phases I and II of the Emerald network constitution process. In Phases I and II, which deal with site identification, designation and sufficiency assessment, only scientific arguments are taken into account, while in Phase III socio-economic considerations participate in setting up the necessary conservation measures. Thus, the methodology of the Emerald Network establishment process does not allow the site management considerations affect decisions about site selection for designation.

The management and conservation measures of ASCIs must be based on the ecological requirements of 'Emerald' species and habitats present at the site. They should be implemented to fulfil the conservation objectives for the abovementioned features. A regular monitoring of the management success must be undertaken in order to judge about the appropriateness of applied conservation measures with a view on their possible improvement in future.

10. RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

COMMISSION NOTE ON THE DESIGNATION OF SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SACs). Final Version of 14/05/2012

COMMISSION NOTE ON SETTING CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES FOR NATURA 2000 SITES. Final Version 23/11/2012

COMMISSION NOTE ON ESTABLISHING CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR NATURA 2000 SITES. Final version of 18/09/2013

Recommendation No. 16 (1989) of the Standing Committee on the Setting-up the Emerald Network

Recommendation No. 25 (1991) of the Standing Committee on the conservation of natural areas outside protected areas proper (adopted by the Standing Committee on 6 December 1991)

Recommendation No. 157 (2011) of the Standing Committee on the status of candidate Emerald sites and guidelines on the criteria for their nomination

Resolution No. 5 (1998) of the Standing Committee concerning the rules for the Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest (Emerald Network)(Adopted by the Standing Committee on 4 December 1998) and revised Appendix to the Resolution (Adopted by the Standing Committee on 6 December 2013)

Resolution No. 8 (2012) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 30 November 2012 on the national designation of adopted Emerald sites and the implementation of management, monitoring and reporting measures