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T-PVS/PA (2009) 15

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks

1st meeting
Strasbourg, 17 September 2009
Room 2, Palais de l'Europe

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REPORT

*Document prepared by
the Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage*

On 17 September 2009, the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks held in Strasbourg its first meeting.

Following its conclusions, the Standing Committee is invited to:

- Take note of the present report;
- Take note of the final report of the CARDS/Emerald Programme, implemented in six South-Eastern European countries, in cooperation and with the financial support of the European Environment Agency;
- Take note of the conclusions and recommendations of the draft report “Protected Areas and Climate Change”;
- Take note of the progress made in the implementation of the joint Council of Europe / European Union programme “Support for the implementation of the CBD’s Programme of Work on Protected Areas”, targeting seven Central and Eastern European countries, and South Caucasus;
- Welcome the offer of cooperation made by European Environment Agency, on the basis of a 5 year implementation plan and a mid-term perspective;
- Endorse the draft programme of activities of the Group of Experts for 2010.

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIRPERSON

Mr Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Chairperson of the Group of Experts, opened the meeting and addressed some welcoming remarks to the participants (listed in Appendix I).

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE 1ST MEETING OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS

Document for adoption

T-PVS/PA (2009) OJ 7 - Draft agenda

The Group of Experts adopted the draft agenda (appendix 2) without amendments.

3. PRESENTATION BY THE SECRETARIAT OF THE NEW MANDATE OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS

The Secretariat introduced the terms of reference of the Group of Experts, as approved by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention at its 28th Meeting, and pointed out that it had been decided to enlarge the mandate of the Group by including all the activities related to protected areas and ecological networks. Mr. Eladio Fernández Galiano, Head of the Council of Europe's Biological Diversity Unit, stressed that the inclusion of protected areas in the mandate of the Group of Experts is meant to reinforce the contribution of the Council of Europe to the Convention on Biological Diversity's Programme of Work. Finally, he informed the Group of Experts that the Standing Committee could eventually consider, in the near future, the opportunity of extending the Group's mandate to be informed of the outcomes of the Group of Specialists of the European Diploma, and to discuss some contentious cases of the European Diploma of protected areas.

The Chairperson expressed the Group of Experts' satisfaction with the decisions taken by the Standing Committee and reiterated that the Group of Experts would continue to do the necessary work to implement Recommendation No. 16 (1989) on Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCI), by making proposals to build up and strengthen the Emerald Network. In addition, he stressed the importance of the Pan-European Ecological Network and encouraged the members of the Group of Experts to devote more time for discussions on this topic.

4. DECISIONS OF THE 28TH MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE BERN CONVENTION

Document for information

T-PVS (2008) 23 - Extract of the report of the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention

The Secretariat presented the extract of the report of the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and the decisions taken by the committee on that occasion.

The delegate from Switzerland, Mr. Olivier Biber, thanked the Secretariat for its summary report, and noted that the Standing Committee asked to the Group of Experts to report on the criteria for the selection and approval of sites.

The Chairperson informed the participants that the procedure of evaluation and acceptance of sites would be discussed under item 9 of the agenda and welcomed the participation of a representative of the European Environment Agency, whose contribution would be much appreciated.

5. PRESENTATION OF CURRENT EUROPEAN MEETINGS WHICH ARE OF INTEREST FOR THE GROUP OF EXPERTS

The Secretariat and the Chairperson informed the Group of Expert of three European meetings held in 2009, dedicated to protected areas and ecological networks:

- The Secretariat reported on the conference “Towards a Green Infrastructure for Europe”, held in Brussels, on 25-26 May 2009. The conference’s main aims were to determine an appropriate European Community response to habitats’ fragmentation, and to identify the actions that would be most effective at EU level. The Secretariat underlined that the terminology used at EU level when referring to green infrastructures is in fact the equivalent of the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN) at the Council of Europe. However, green infrastructures also embrace the economic sector and consider nature as an economic resource.
- The Chairperson informed the Group of Experts about the conference “Wilderness and large natural habitats areas in Europe”, held on 27-28 May, in Prague. The conference was organised by the Czech Presidency of the European Union and aimed at developing a coordinated strategy for the protection, restoration and conservation of wild and nearly-wild areas across Europe. The Chairperson emphasised that wilderness is a topic which has not yet been sufficiently explored and that wild areas have not to be managed in the traditional way. Mr. Plesnik underlined that the outputs of the conference would be presented at the global conference on wilderness in Europe, to take place later this year.
- The Secretariat informed the Group of Experts on the forthcoming fifth intergovernmental conference on “Biodiversity in Europe”, to take place in Liège (Belgium), on 22-24 September 2009. The conference would discuss the state of Europe’s biodiversity, develop a post-2010 vision and establish targets for biodiversity for the pan-European region. The Secretariat noted that the conference would also be the occasion to evaluate the strengths and weakness of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy.

The delegate from France, Ms Fanny Lendi-Ramirez, informed the Group of Experts of a high-level meeting on the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), organised by the Swedish Presidency of the European Union on 7-9 September in Strömstad, Sweden, which focussed on the revision of the Strategic Plan for the Convention on Biological Diversity and, in particular, on the development of new biodiversity visions and targets following the evaluation of the 2010 target. Ms Lendi-Ramirez pointed out that the role of the Bern Convention for ensuring ecological coherence in an enlarged Europe beyond 2010 should not be underestimated.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND PROTECTED AREAS

Document for information

T-PVS/INF (2009) 10 – Protected Areas and Climate Change

The Secretariat presented the draft report “Protected Areas and Climate Change”, prepared by Mr. Miguel Araújo for the Council of Europe. The report had been already discussed at the meeting of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change, held in Strasbourg on 2-3 July 2009. The Secretariat provided some general information on the report’s background, as well as on the mandate of the Group of Experts on climate change. The Group of Experts was informed that protected areas and climate change will be one of the topics on the agenda of the Standing Committee at its 28th meeting, where a draft recommendation on this issue is submitted for discussion and eventual adoption???

The delegate from France welcomed the report while sharing some concerns on the projections made on the impact of climate change on the Natura 2000 network. She stressed that, although much scientific data have been collected, more information is needed for a realistic estimate on the impact of climate change on eco-networks. She added that the Intergovernmental Platform on

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) could make a contribution to the scientific data collection.

The representative of the European Centre for Nature Conservation (ECNC) Mr. Rob Walters, supported the statement of the delegate from France, and recognised the relevance of the recommendations made in the report. He informed the Group of Experts that a project implemented by ECNC in South Eastern Europe showed the need to raise awareness on the negative impact of climate change, as well as on ecosystems' services. He informed the Group that the recommendations of the project's final report had been considered at the political level in the targeted countries.

Ms Dominique Richard, representing the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity, thanked the Secretariat for the interesting report, while stressing some ambiguities in the language. The Secretariat took note of the specific comments to be transmitted to the author who prepares a final version.

The delegate from Norway, Mr. Tore Opdhal, indicated some wrong figures concerning the number of protected areas in his country.

The Chair concluded the session reminding that ecosystems-based adaptation should be kept on the agenda of future work. He stressed the importance of an in-depth approach on the protected areas management system in the light of climate change.

7. EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON “DELIVERING BIODIVERSITY TARGETS: 2010 AND BEYOND – PROTECTED AREAS AND ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS”

Document for information

T-PVS/PA (2009) 2 – Draft programme

The Secretariat informed the Group of Experts on progress made in the preparation of the conference, scheduled on 25-27 January 2010, in Madrid. The conference will also serve as a European launch of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010. The Secretariat stressed that the draft agenda distributed at the Group of Experts could be subject to a further review, following some last minute comments sent to the organisers by the European Commission. A trilateral meeting between representatives of the Spanish Presidency of the European Union, the European Commission and the Council of Europe would take place in Brussels, on 23 September 2009, with the aim to agree on a new revised draft agenda. The Secretariat would further provide the Group with updated information on this topic.

8. PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EMERALD NETWORK IN THE SOUTH-EAST EUROPE: FINALISATION OF THE CARDS' PROGRAMME CARRIED ON IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN AGENCY OF ENVIRONMENT

Document for information

T-PVS/PA (2009) 4 – Final report of the CARDS programme in South-East Europe

The consultant on the Emerald Network, Mr. Marc Roekaerts, gave a short but detailed report on the background of the CARDS/Emerald programme, implemented in six countries of South-East Europe. The main outputs concerned:

- The overview of the data delivered;
- The summary of the number of species and habitats identified by each country;
- The Emerald sites' GIS boundaries;
- The number of proposed Emerald sites per country.

The delegate from Serbia, Ms Snežana Prokić, informed the Group of Experts that, following the project's implementation, a number of legal instruments had been adopted. She asked the Secretariat to provide more information on next steps for the integration of the Emerald Network.

The Secretariat informed that the follow-up to be given to Emerald sites' identification consists in evaluating the combined data gathered through the Emerald projects, and to submit the proposed list of sites to the Standing Committee for adoption. Following its decision, the national Emerald teams would have to work autonomously on the management of the sites.

The Chairperson concluded by congratulating all the delegations participating in the CARDS/Emerald programme for the considerable efforts to implement it, and underlined that the regional approach of these projects has proved to be useful not only for capacity-building, but also for creating synergies between the participating countries.

9. PROCEDURE OF EVALUATION AND ACCEPTATION OF THE AREAS OF SPECIAL CONSERVATION INTEREST OF THE EMERALD NETWORK

The Chairperson briefly informed the Group of Experts on the results of the internal technical co-ordination meeting, held in Strasbourg on 24 March 2009. The meeting aimed at exploring paths of cooperation between the Council of Europe and the European Environment Agency (EEA), as well as ways to streamline the lists in Annex I of the Habitats Directive within the Emerald Network context.

The Secretariat informed that a meeting with representatives of the EEA had been held in Paris, on 24 April 2009. The meeting aimed at fixing the basis for substantial work on protected areas, bearing in mind the Memorandum of Cooperation signed between the Council of Europe and the European Environment Agency. Mr. Eladio Fernandez-Galiano, Head of the Council of Europe's Biological Diversity Unit, praised the effectiveness of ongoing cooperation with the EEA and its European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD). He added that the Secretariat had received a letter signed by Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the EEA, renewing EEA's commitment for a strengthened cooperation in the field of the evaluation of criteria for the selection and approval of sites.

Ms Dominique Richard, representing ETC/BD, informed the Group of Experts that EEA suggests framing the cooperation with the Council of Europe within a 5 year period, and around two main issues:

- Use of EEA enhanced tools to support data-flows, namely around the Common Database on Designated Areas (CDDA) and Natura 2000;
- Provision of expertise with technical guidance and assessment of the sufficiency of the network.

She noted that in 2010, the assessment of the sufficiency of the network as defined under the CARDS project could include the preparation of bio-geographical seminars, based on the Natura 2000's scheme. This approach would allow to have an overview of the situation within the bio-geographic regions, beyond the national borders. She felt confident that 2010 would be the appropriate moment for planning cooperation in this field, as EEA is currently working on its 2010 implementation plan. However, she noted that EEA capacity for the evaluation of data would have to be carefully assessed, and asked the Secretariat to provide EEA with the list of services and expertise needed.

The delegate from Norway, called for more modern data-flows for the Emerald Network, and noted that there are differences between the lists of the Habitats Directive and those used for the Emerald Network.

Ms Dominique Richard mentioned that ETC/BD has an automatic procedure for the analysis of data-flows, with two pages guidelines for users, and that this efficient tool could possibly be extended to the Emerald Network.

Mr Marc Roekaerts stressed the importance of maintaining consistency between the Natura 2000 and Emerald networks, with regards both to the classification of habitat types and to the lists of the Habitats Directive. He informed that this topic had been also raised by the seven South Caucasus and Central and Eastern Europe countries targeted by the Joint Council of Europe / European Union programme for the development of the Emerald Network in their area.

The Chairperson thought it necessary to carry out a comparative study of the habitats lists of those two instruments. He closed the session thanking EEA and its ETC/BD for the commitment renewed, and asked the Secretariat to update the Group of Experts and the Standing Committee on progress made in the field of cooperation between the two institutions.

10. BRIEF UPDATES ON NATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

Document for information

T-PVS/PA (2009) 11 – State of progress of the pilot projects

T-PVS/PA (2009) 8 – Information document

The Secretariat briefly presented the state of progress of pilot projects, giving particular emphasis to the work-plan of the pilot project launched in Morocco, in June 2009.

The delegate from Switzerland, Mr. Olivier Biber, informed the Group of Experts that his country is ready to formally submit, to the Standing Committee, a list of 37 proposed Emerald sites.

The delegate from Norway reported that in 2008 the Ministry of Environment had officially designated 11 Emerald Network sites. A second phase of the Emerald Network has been launched on the basis of the pilot project's outputs. A comprehensive tentative list of 1,200 potential sites has been drawn up. A subset of 39 sites has been identified, consisting in areas such as national parks and wetland systems, representing the four bio-geographical regions present in Norway. Mr. Opdhal informed that the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management will propose these sites to the Ministry of Environment before the end of 2009, in order to officially designate them. Furthermore, the delegate stressed that Norway made substantial efforts for fulfilling its obligations under Resolution n°16 (1989), namely:

- By establishing an appropriate regime for ASCIs (protected areas represent nearly 16% of the total land area);
- By improving protected areas' management system, through the allocation of additional financial resources to the sector, as well as the establishment of responsible Agencies and field rangers;
- By implementing management plans for each protected area;
- By marking all protected areas' boundaries;
- By monitoring ASCIs.

Finally, the Norwegian delegate informed that, on 1st July 2009, the Nature management Act was adopted. The Act provides guidance for the sustainable use and protection of the natural environment.

The delegate from Serbia, Ms Snežana Prokić, informed the Group of Experts that her country would submit an official request to the Secretariat for the evaluation of the results of the pilot project.

The Chairperson thanked the speakers and welcomed the progress made for the implementation of the Emerald Network.

11. PRESENTATION OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EMERALD NETWORK IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE COUNTRIES, AND SOUTH CAUCASUS

The Secretariat gave an overview of the Council of Europe / European Union joint programme: “Support for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)’s Programme of Work on Protected Areas in the EU Neighbourhood Policy East Area and Russia”.

Launched in January 2009 and with a duration of 3 years, the Programme is funded by Europe Aid, through the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI), and is implemented by the Council of Europe. The project targets the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and the Russian Federation. Its overall objective is to protect the biodiversity in the ENP east countries, and to align the activities pursued by the Council of Europe in the area of ecological networks with the CBD’s Programme of Work. The Secretariat informed the Group of Experts that the Steering Committee of the Joint Programme would hold its first meeting on 18 September, in Strasbourg. On that occasion, the first Progress report would be presented for adoption.

11.1. PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT FOR ARMENIA AND GEORGIA (FINANCED BY FRENCH GOVERNMENT)

Document for information

T-PVS/PA (2009) 9 – Report

Mr. Marc Roekaerts, consultant for this programme, gave an overview of the project’s aims, background and results. He explained that both Armenia and Georgia had previously conducted Emerald pilot projects, nevertheless, both countries needed to complete their pilot projects’ data-bases, in order to be able to implement the Emerald Joint Programme mentioned under point 11 of this report. The financial contribution from France had therefore been fundamental as it had allowed for a data quality check, as well as for building-up databases for future steps.

The Chairperson encouraged the delegations of the countries targeted by the Joint Programme to continue working on the development of the Emerald Network and asked the Secretariat to present the first Progress Report to the Standing Committee for information. He closed this session by congratulating France for its contribution to the establishment of the Emerald Network in Armenia and Georgia.

12. DRAFT PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2010

The Secretariat reminded that the PoA of the Group of Experts in 2010 would be adopted by the Standing Committee at its 29th meeting. Following its Terms of Reference, the Group should concentrate on the following suggested items:

- Follow-up of the outputs of the European conference on delivering biodiversity targets beyond 2010 (see point 7 of this report);
- Evolution of the Emerald Network, and more particularly of the pilot project implemented in Morocco, as well as of the regional Joint Programme targeting Central and Eastern Europe countries, and South Caucasus;
- Follow-up of the cooperation between the Council of Europe and the EEA on protected areas.

Ms Carolina Lasen-Diaz, representing the Secretariat, noted that the Group of Experts could also analyse the results of the 14th meeting of the CBD’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-14), to be held on 10 - 21 May 2010 in Nairobi, Kenya, as protected areas will be one of the key issues on the agenda.

The delegate from Belgium, Mr. Jacques Stein, asked the Group of Experts to highlight the role that the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN) plays with regards to protected areas. He stressed that protected areas should not be resumed to the Emerald Network, and pointed out that discussions on the PEEN should be included in the agenda of the Group's next meeting.

The Chairperson confirmed that the PEEN is not a system of isolated sites and therefore is a valid instrument for halting biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems. He pointed out that the fifth intergovernmental conference on "Biodiversity in Europe", which would discuss about future developments of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS), would be the occasion for recognising the PEEN contribution to biodiversity conservation.

The delegate from Switzerland, Mr. Olivier Biber, noted the interconnection between the activities carried-out within the framework of the Emerald Network and the European Diploma of protected areas. He suggested that the Group of Experts could ask the Standing Committee to adapt the planning of these two areas of work, in order to improve their coherence and highlight their complementarities.

The Chairperson summed-up the interventions as the agreed future activities to be presented to the Standing Committee.

13.ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND THE VICE-CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS

The Group of Experts elected Ms Maka Tsereteli (Georgia), as new Chairperson, and Mr. Jacques Stein (Belgium), as Vice-chairperson of the Group of Experts.

14.OTHER BUSINESS

No other points were raised.

15.CLOSING

The Chairperson recalled that:

- The report on Protected Areas and Climate Change has a draft status and asked the Parties to submit their comments on time for allowing the Secretariat to review the text and submit a final version to the Standing Committee for adoption;
- The report of the First Steering Committee of the Emerald Joint Programme in Central and Eastern Europe countries, and South Caucasus; will be finalised in time for being submitted to the Standing Committee;
- The planning and distribution of tasks in the field of the evaluation of the data collected will be agreed by the Council of Europe and the EEA before the Standing Committee meeting.

The Group of Experts thanked Mr. Plesnik for his able chairmanship over the past years.

The Chairperson closed the meeting, expressing his great satisfaction with the development in the field of Ecological Networks and Protected Areas.

Annex I

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Annex II

DRAFT AGENDA

Group of experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks

17 September 2009

9h30 – 18h00

1. Opening of the meeting by the Chair of the Group of experts, Mr Jan Plesnik
2. Adoption of the agenda of the 1st meeting of the Group of experts
Document for adoption:
T-PVS/PA (2009) OJ 7 - Draft agenda
3. Presentation by the Secretariat of the new mandate of the Group of experts
4. Decisions of the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention – Protection of natural habitats
 - Presentation by the Secrétariat of the work of the Standing Committee
 - Extract of the report*Document for information:*
T-PVS (2008) 23 – Extract of the report
5. Presentation of current European meetings which are of interest for this Committee
 - Information on the Conference : « Green Infrastructures for Europe»
 - Information on the « Conference on wilderness and large natural habitat areas »
 - Information on the Conference « Biodiversity in Europe »
6. Climate change and Protected Areas
 - Presentation by the Secrétariat of the report « Protected Areas and Climate Change »
 - Exchange of views of the Group of experts on this report*Document for information:*
 - T-PVS/INF (2009) 10 – Report « Protected Areas and Climate Change »
7. European Conference of the Council of Europe « Protected Areas and Ecological Networks in Europe : new challenges for the Biodiversity upon 2010», organised in the framework of the Spanish Presidency of the European Union, Madrid, January 2010
Document for information
T-PVS/PA (2009) 2 – Draft Programme
 - Presentation by the Secretariat of the aims of the Conference, draft programme and the state of progress in the preparation
8. Programme for the development of the Emerald Network in South-East Europe : finalisation of the CARDS' programme carried on in co-operation with the European Agency of Environment
Document for information:
T-PVS/PA (2009) 4 – final report of the CARDS programme in South-East Europe
 - Short presentation by the Secretariat and the consultant of the Emerald programme

9. Procedure of evaluation and acceptance of the areas of special conservation interest of the Emerald Network: presentation by Mr Jan Plesnik and the consultant of the results and current discussions concerning the setting up of criteria and acceptance of the sites
 - Second technical coordination meeting, Strasbourg, 24 March 2009
 - Meeting organised by the European Environment Agency, Paris, 24 April 2009
10. Brief updates on national activities and initiatives by the national delegations
 - Documents for information:*
 - T-PVS/PA (2009) 11 – State of progress of the pilot projects
 - T-PVS/PA (2009) 8 – Information document
11. Presentation of the joint programme with the European Union for the development of the Emerald Network in South Caucasus and in Central and Eastern Europe
 - 11.1. Programme of support for Armenia and Georgia financed by French authorities. Presentation of the results by the expert consultant of the Emerald network and national representatives
 - Document for information:*
 - T-PVS/PA (2009) 9 - Report
12. Draft programme of activities for 2010
 - Follow-up of the resolutions of the Madrid Conference
 - Evolution of the Emerald Network
13. Election of the Chair and the Vice-chair of the Group of experts
14. Other business
15. Closing

The documents will be available on the web-site of the Council of Europe:
www.coe.int/biodiversity/emerald

Annex III
Written contribution submitted by the delegate from Norway

EMERALD NETWORK – NORWAY, STATUS 2009

The Ministry of the Environment (MoE), on behalf of the Norwegian Government made a formal designation for 11 Emerald Network sites in 2008.

At the Directorate for Nature Management (DN) we've started Phase II of Emerald Network. Based on the [Pilot project Report](#) we've made a comprehensive tentative list, consisting of over 1200 potential Emerald sites.

- A subset of 39 sites has been selected, consisting of 79 nationally protected areas (PA), for designation to Emerald Network.
- Several of these are large areas like National parks and wetland systems, representing all parts of Norway and all the 4 biogeographical regions we have.
- Our agency will propose these sites soon, and the MoE will probably be able to make a formal designation for these additional sites in 2009.

Our agency wants to speed up the progress of designating Emerald Network sites through 2010-11. But unfortunately we cannot give any deadline for delivery of a complete dataset for Norway.

But we will also stress the fact that Norway has come quite far in fulfilling other “steps” of the recommendations according to res 16 (1989), on defining Emerald Network sites, or more precisely “Areas of special conservation interest (ASCIs). These are some of the “steps” we wish to highlight:

3 a) establishing an “appropriate regime” for ASCIs

- About 2500 nationally PAs has been established since 1970. They represent nearly 16 % of our total land area. A lot of these PAs will over time end up as ASCIs.
- Each PA has got its own provision, authorized from national legislation (Nature Conservation Act (1970) or Nature Management Act (2009)).
- The new and modern Nature management Act (2009) was adopted 1st of July this year. It provides rules for the sustainable use and protection of the natural environment. This means new tools for safeguarding nature, not only within, but also protected areas. Two protective schemes are developed in addition to PAs. That is “Selected habitat types” and “Priority species and their natural habitats”. This way we adopt the thinking and the principles of Emerald network and Natura 2000.

3 b) the “power to manage” ASCIs

- All nationally PAs has got responsible agencies - ie management authorities (county governors or the municipal government) and field rangers (the State Nature Inspectorate)
- More financial resources are spent on management. In fact, the financial crisis is in part responsible for this, because raised spending in the public sector is used as a tool to counteract the financial crises.

4 a) on the “implementation of management plans”

- More than 500 PAs has been selected for an urgent need of a management plan.
- Financial resources to make management plans is rising, and about 100 management plans are commenced or under revision each year.
- The quality of management plans becomes better and is more targeted to the conservation objectives.

4 c) on the “marking of boundaries”

- In practice all PAs are marked on the ground and have maps of good quality.
- Every PA is held in digital format and presented in a user friendly format on the internet ([Naturbase](#)).

4 d) on “advising the competent authorities and landowners”

- We have several database tools for information about and management of PAs. A lot more sophisticated tools are under development and will be launched in 2011.
- There is better dialog with landowners now than before. The Nature Management Act (2009) also ensures greater consistency and clarity for landowners and local communities involved.

4 e) on “monitoring of ASCIs”

- A comprehensive monitoring program to reveal the status of conservation objectives is under development. Great effort is taken to secure co-ordination to biodiversity measures both in and outside PAs.

The designation of ASCIs is often mentioned as “a starting point” of the Emerald Network. The contracting parties are then recommended to take “further steps” to ensure “proper management”. As noted in the above examples, we’ve already come quite far on these “steps”. So the process of designation has become a sort of “end point” for us. But of course we acknowledge that there is far more to do with respect to “proper management” for us too.

Aside from this we will put more effort in our work to pinpoint exactly what kind of biodiversity we have protected (according to the resolution), and to deliver this information to the secretariat in a proper format.

Thursday, 17 September 2009

Tore Opdahl
Senior Executive Officer
Directorate for Nature Management