

Summary of workshops



Different global and EU policies supporting wetlands restoration and conservation

- ▶ the policy framework on national and regional level.
- ▶ There are some good examples for restoration taking place in several European countries.
- ▶ identified some success factors, but also concluded that having the right law in place or even financing possibilities or having awareness alone are not sufficient to make or deliver huge results in restoration work. Even if there is a law in place, it doesn't guarantee that the law will be put in practice (e.g. Dutch water law).
- ▶ Other economic interests should be considered when decisions are made.
- ▶ We need a combination of factors to be successful in restoration.

Different global and EU policies supporting wetlands restoration and conservation

Recommendations in order to reach success in restoration:

- ▶ Most important: sharing outcomes with stakeholders, so everyone benefits from the outcome;
- ▶ Which requires that we (nature conservationists) change our attitudes to consider others' interests throughout the whole process;
- ▶ A strong law enforcement should be in place
- ▶ Providing funding for restoration within the new CAP
- ▶ Setting up new financial instrument for ten-G
- ▶ Exchanging experiences among stakeholders and bring them to the policy level
- ▶ Communication towards all stakeholders regarding benefits for all stakeholders
- ▶ Concrete recommendation: involving zoos and enhancing synergies between in situ and ex situ conservation, and cooperating them on communication and outreach regarding restoration.

Practice and implementation of NWRM and NBS in Natura 2000

- ▶ The participants highlighted the following key points as regards the implementation and mainstreaming of NWRM/NBS:
- ▶ Dependency on EU funding for measures can be a limiting factor. A side effect of EU funding is the creation of so called “hotspots” of projects: regions that are experienced in working with EU grants tend to apply for more EU funding, creating a disbalance with other regions. Capacity needs to be more evenly spread across the EU (but is a challenge to achieve). On the other hand, Life grants create the dynamics and a well-defined task for a project to be successful.
- ▶ Ownership of land that is already designated for nature (restoration) is often a decisive factor.
- ▶ Communication and explaining the message you want to bring is crucial. Events such as floods and droughts can be helpful to communicate the message or to create political and public support. The concept of ‘Nature-based solutions’ has brought a narrative to solutions that existed already. Sometimes people are not conscious of the concept. The existence of many terms (NBS, GI, ecosystem-based approach) is confusing. However, it is debatable whether unifying terminology would be helpful to increase understanding between different sectors. Furthermore, communication of NBS should not just be about the ‘what’ but also about ‘how’ (and ‘for whom’: emphasize we are doing it for people). Platforms (Openness, Oppla) are suitable for sharing experiences but more effort is needed to improve accessibility for local stakeholders and authorities. Finally, monitoring of effects and capturing evidence is key and should be used for ongoing communication about the effects of measures. Make sure monitoring begins before the start of the project.

Practice and implementation of NWRM and NBS in Natura 2000

- ▶ The difference between short term gains and long term benefits may hinder the implementation of measures. On the other hand, there has been experience with new business cases for NBS that may support implementation of more measures. For example, gravel and sand which becomes available during floodplain restoration can be sold to the construction industry.
- ▶ Some of the local/regional experiences with implementation of measures:
- ▶ NGOs that have acquired land noticed it has made them a serious partner in the region with a certain amount of influence. In Romania, changing land ownership is an administrative burden.
- ▶ Community resistance or support has often impacted the implementation and put pressure on politicians.
- ▶ In research and design of measures, don't overlook the knowledge of local people. In some cases, there is a lack of expertise on local ecosystems. This can hamper the implementation of measures.
- ▶ Traditional relations between farmers and water managers can be persistent but in some cases have been overcome.
- ▶ Exchange of experiences and field trips across Europe can inspire promoters of NBS. The Natural Climate Buffers Study Tour has shown participants how the mind shift from grey to green infrastructure happened.

Eurosite Management Planning Guidance

- ▶ there was consensus that a management planning toolkit would be useful and an international course would be suitable. Suggestion: to check out the global strategy for plant conservation (by Prof. Maxted). Second issue: face to face meetings would be valuable between representatives of different countries either national or international. Gathering stakeholders together to harvest knowledge of historic management practices. To provide stakeholder engagement guidance with examples of successes. Lastly: not restrict the number of meetings with stakeholders, have as many meetings as necessary to get agreement among stakeholders. Main topics: how to accommodate the requirements of sites with different levels of designation. Suggestion on taking the stakeholders of similar sites or facing similar problems of one country to another country to reach to provide examples to illustrate solutions can be found (twinning?). lastly a number of references were provided by participants that can be used in the Eurosite management planning guidance.

Scientific modelling in management planning and ecosystem services

What possibilities do you see for the broader application of modelling in site management and restoration?

- ▶ Need to consider:
- ▶ The scale of the modelling needed, ie site vs catchments vs larger.
- ▶ The resources available for modelling, money and staff
- ▶ The development of rapid prototype modelling to consider operational timings and funds of projects.
- ▶ A standard definition of models/modelling, ie conceptual vs spatial vs digital
- ▶ The limitation of models
- ▶ Modelling of changes caused by climate change would be useful.

What is needed/what are the issues to achieve broader application of modelling in planning management and restoration?

- ▶ Consistency in models.
- ▶ Need systematic modelling.
- ▶ Models should integrate existing planning mechanisms.
- ▶ Need good quality data.
- ▶ “Quick and dirty” models would be good.
- ▶ Need “Open Source” science principles.

Scientific modelling in management planning and ecosystem services

What role do you see for ecosystem service concepts in planning your management and restoration actions?

- ▶ Use ES concept to secure funding.
- ▶ Holistic view of ES is needed and don't forget biodiversity
- ▶ Need to make sure decision makers understand ES.
- ▶ Do not forget to review Ecosystem approach as described in Convention on Biodiversity document.

Do you know of any good examples of integrating modelling and or the ecosystem services approach into site management and decision-making?

- ▶ Crop wild relative conservation.
- ▶ UK coastal work (National Trust).
- ▶ Population models of threatened species (world-wide).
- ▶ Protected area system design (world-wide). (Natura 2000)
- ▶ Natural Flood Management (UK)
- ▶ Agri-environment schemes (EU)

Other issues

- ▶ Consider and embrace the use of new technology and data techniques such as multi-spectral analysis, artificial intelligence, UAVs.

The role of ELCN

Goal

- ▶ Engage people (and specifically land holders) in conservation

Background

- ▶ Better understanding of private land conservation and PPAs in European context
 - ▶ Need clarity on use of key terms in the European context (e.g. private governance, PPAs etc to help understand scope of network)
 - ▶ National reviews of private land stewardship, PPAs etc and national legal frameworks
 - ▶ Work with EEA to report governance of PAs in the Common Database on Designated Areas (CDDA) **AND** encourage national, NGO etc reporting directly to the WDPA

The role of ELCN

Potential projects

- ▶ Encourage peer to peer learning, for example:
 - ▶ Document and disseminate positive examples of engagement of local people/land owners (and of approaches that did not work)
 - ▶ Understand contributions of NGOs (and other private governance entities) to protected area establishment and management
 - ▶ Support smaller/emerging NGOs working on land conservation
- ▶ Research new models of designating, establishing and financing PPAs (e.g. easements, carbon financing)

Advocacy

- ▶ Understand gaps in European legislation and encourage better support for PPAs
- ▶ Work with CCDA on information base (see above)

The role of ELCN

Role

- ▶ If easements are seen as a way forward then a tracking/monitoring role will be required. A combination of methods was suggested:
 - ▶ Satellite monitoring
 - ▶ Public database – encouraging public scrutiny
 - ▶ Monitoring project (e.g. every 10 years)
- ▶ It was noted that initially more detailed and frequent monitoring would be required as ‘proof of concept’, i.e. to show that easements are (or are not) effective conservation tools in Europe
- ▶ It was also noted that peer to peer learning was important but should be carried out as ‘group’ to ‘group’ not ‘person’ to ‘person’

The role of ELCN

Private conservation initiatives: A diverse approach to partners in the ELCN

- ▶ Several organisations who own/managed private conservation initiatives were suggested as sources of data/partners in ELC:
 - ▶ FSC: as certification mandates a % of land for conservation
 - ▶ Hunting concessions
 - ▶ Zoos
 - ▶ Engaging owners/managers of areas important for connectivity, buffer zones for PAs and PPAs
- ▶ Reporting data – challenges and issues were also discussed
 - ▶ The importance of finding incentives (CBD Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, national pride etc) was also discussed

Risk based decision making

- ▶ how people interact and decide trade-offs between competing values when making a decision.
- ▶ how best to engage with experts when you want them to contribute to a decision.
- ▶ psychological weaknesses among scientists and how best to anticipate them.
- ▶ group dynamics and how to use groups to estimate facts and the outcomes of future events.
- ▶ how to construct values hierarchies and how to use them to reconcile competing objectives amongst stakeholders.

Risk based decision making

- ▶ Recommendations: to distrust conventional measures of expertise, such as a persons' age, experience, publications, memberships, the esteem in which they are held by their peers. None of those things are a guide to a persons' ability to make good judgements. The best strategy is to use a diverse group to have them make independent judgements and find the average of those judgements.
- ▶ Lastly: experts should not be used to make value trade-offs, it is not their job. We recommend when you are confronted by a difficult decision with competing stakeholders and different values that you use structured decision making to help you to simplify the problem and find acceptable solutions.