

Invitation for networking events proposals

We would like to bring to your attention the possibility of support for the promotion or organisation of networking events to promote working together across borders, within the framework of the Natura 2000 biogeographical process.

What are networking events within the Natura 2000 biogeographical process?

Networking events are thematic workshops, addressing conservation and management issues related to habitat types, species and management themes of the Natura 2000 network and certain targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

The events can be proposed, hosted and organised by a Member State, a Natura 2000 management body, Natura 2000 landowners, a scientific institute or any other organisation involved in the management of Natura 2000. Events can be live as well as online, or in a hybrid form, combining the two. In some cases, the networking event may be linked to a conference dealing with a relevant topic for Natura 2000 and may include a field visit, to study best practices for management of habitats and species.

Typically, a networking event may involve anything between 20 and 40 participants from different Member States: professionals involved in management of Natura 2000, policy implementation, monitoring, reporting or research (for online events, a maximum of 50 people). Together, these stakeholders will exchange experiences and develop joint actions on a theme that has been previously identified (e.g. by the steering committee for a biogeographical region, a previous seminar or networking event) as a common priority and shared interest for the Natura 2000 biogeographical process, such as the following:

- Natura 2000, setting conservation objectives and measures, site management and monitoring
- Monitoring of species and habitats, definition of favourable reference values, species and habitats action planning
- Integrated implementation of the Nature Directives, stakeholder involvement and awareness raising
- Financing and mainstreaming of Natura 2000
- Determination of priorities for action
- Etc.

In addition, networking events supporting Member States in preparing their pledges for the following targets under the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030 are highly welcome:

- **Targets on protected areas:** legally protect at least 30% of the land, including inland waters, and 30% of the sea in the EU, of which at least one third (10% of land and 10% of sea) to be under strict protection, and effectively manage all protected areas, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately;
- **Target for status improvement and halting deterioration of protected species and habitats:** ensure no deterioration in conservation trends and status of all protected habitats and species by 2030 and ensure that at least 30% of species and habitats not currently in favourable status are in that category or show a strong positive trend by 2030.

Events can either focus on specific biogeographical regions or cover cross-cutting issues involving several or all biogeographical regions.

How do we support networking events?

We can:

- promote the event, for example through our website, Twitter or the Natura 2000 biogeographical process newsletter.
- provide advice on preparation of the event, for example developing the agenda and identifying speakers, etc.
- act as co-organisers, collaborating with the organisers and chairing or facilitating some workshop sessions in the event; in this role we may also contribute financially.
- assist in the organisation of online events or hybrid meetings, including organising facilitated break-out groups and streaming of meetings online using our MS Teams platform.

NB: If your proposal is linked to an EU funded project, please bear in mind the following principles:

- In case EU financing is involved in the financing of the event, financing under the current contract can only be used for additional measures that would not have taken place otherwise.
- A specific cost can never be co-financed by two different EU funding sources.

What kind of support can you apply for?

Networking events are part of the service contract for the Natura 2000 biogeographical process, which is being delivered by Wageningen Environmental Research and partner organisations for the European Commission. Under this contract, networking events that contribute to the Natura 2000 biogeographical process can be advertised on the EC's dedicated webpage ([Natura 2000 Communication Platform](#)) and through other communication tools (including the Natura 2000 biogeographical process newsletter). If necessary, resources and funding (up to 3 500 € per event) are also available to:

- Facilitate meetings;
- Pay for some speakers and travel costs;
- Cover or partly cover costs for venue, catering or site visit.

Participant organisations will be responsible for their own costs.

How do you apply?

We thus encourage you to update us on any networking event(s) you are planning. In order to **receive support** regarding the communication, organisation, technical input and/or workshop facilitation necessary for a successful event, it is necessary to submit a **formal proposal** to Natura2000Platform@wur.nl.

Please submit your **proposal using the provided template before 10 February 2022**. Applicants will be informed whether the proposed event can be supported by mid-March 2022.

*The Management Team of the European Commission's service support contract
for the Natura 2000 biogeographical process*

For more information on the Natura 2000 biogeographical process, please visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/platform/index_en.htm