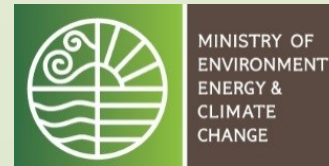




Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process Mediterranean Kick-off Seminar

Thessaloniki, 26 – 28 May 2014

Freshwater and Wetlands Working Group



*Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process
Mediterranean Region*

Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

09.30 to 11.00

Key findings of the Seminar Input Document

Selected freshwater and wetland habitats:

1. 3170 - Mediterranean temporary ponds
2. 3290 - Intermittently flowing Mediterranean rivers of the Paspalo-Agrostidion
3. 92D0 - Southern riparian galleries and thickets (Nerio-Tamaricetea and Securinegion tinctoriae)
4. 92A0 - Salix alba and Populus alba galleries



Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

Main issues and problems

1. Changes in hydrological and morphological conditions
2. Pollution
3. Invasive non-native species
4. Urban development / sprawl
5. Agriculture
6. Forestry
7. Water / habitat management
8. Hunting / fishing
9. Infrastructure and fragmentation
10. Habitat degradation and deterioration / loss



Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

Management needs and practices

1. Integrated (basin) approach
2. Maintaining or restoring the natural hydrological dynamics and the morphology of water bodies
3. Creation of buffer zones, esp. to protect banks and edges
4. Prevention of unsuitable construction, fragmentation, degradation, engineering works, pollution
5. Protect native riparian tree species (also individuals as sources of dispersal)
6. Maintaining native vegetation structure as well as the morphological features of streams and rivers
7. Removing invasive species and measures to avoid dispersal
8. Good agricultural practices
9. Sustainable forestry and non intervention where appropriate



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Bottlenecks and problems

1. Lack of appropriate policies, and their integration
2. Lack of policy implementation and law enforcement
3. Lack of knowledge and awareness
4. Insufficient or poorly managed funds
5. Lack of cooperation
6. Fuelwood extraction due to crisis
7. Lack of cost effectiveness of water value (added value)
8. Lack of scientific work e.g. ecological flow and habitats / species needs and function and structure of the habitats



Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

Solutions and opportunities

1. Improving policies & implementation, including PA designation
2. Integrated, holistic water basin approach to management (“environmental flow management”) and implement relevant Directives (water Framework Directive and Habitats and Birds Directive)
3. Exchange of experience regarding effective fund management
4. Law enforcement and guarding of PA
5. Cooperation with and involvement of stakeholders
6. Land acquisition and agreements with land owners
7. Exchange of knowledge and experience between all stakeholders
8. Awareness raising, information and communication



Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

Farming and Natura 2000: what problems and opportunities?

Dr Anila Shallari, PhD in environmental and geographic sciences, Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (BirdLife), France

- Organic farm measures implemented in migration corridor in Southwestern France
- High biodiversity
- Organic farming to enhance biodiversity values is possible and can make profit
- However, high seasonality of work loads make it difficult to employ people, so much personal dedication and flexibility required
- Measures deliver visible results in biodiversity that should ideally be quantified



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Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

Actions to improve Salix alba and Populus alba galleries (92A0) in two Natura 2000 areas

Ms Vasiliki Tsiaoussi, The Goulandris Natural History Museum - Greek Biotope Wetland Centre, Greece

Nestos case:

- Restoration of small area
- Forest affected by modified hydrological regime
- Success factors:
 - Develop a clear vision
 - Have a committed management authority
 - Make sure to plan maintenance conservation



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Ms Vasiliki Tsiaoussi, The Goulandris Natural History Museum - Greek Biotope Wetland Centre, Greece

Kerkini case:

- Forest flooded by artificial lake for irrigation (high water fluctuations)
- Initial success factors:
 - Work with sectorial organisation
- Problems
 - Government reform after completion: initial buy in was lost



Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

Main conclusions of the case study presentations + discussion

- Need for a clear vision and objectives
- Importance of monitoring effects of management
- Need for baseline, incorporated ecological needs for habitats and species and define favourable conservation status
- Knowledge , research and training
- Adopt integrated adaptive approaches
- Ensure funding for maintenance of management
- Seek appropriate partners
- Assess and anticipate risks
- Combine management plans (for various objectives)
- Carry out studies for the needs of the aquatic (rivers wetlands etc) ecosystems.



Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

General considerations:

For successful management strategies at Biogeographical level

- Need for a sound knowledge base
- Improve definition of habitats (and their grouping), describe sub-types in so far as they are relevant for management choices and strategies
- Consider the management of these habitats also in the context of N2K vs WFD (and other relevant legislation):
 - Threats and pressures
 - Monitoring
 - Using the adequate indicators



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General considerations:

- Reduce the administrative burden for national and regional administrations for implementation of all environment directives: more coordination needed
- Make sure the relevant EU level guidance and documentation cascades down to the level of the site managers. Natura 2000 Platform can help here.



Session 1: Where are we now and where do we need to be?

Results of reflection on case studies and own experience:

- Selected freshwater and wetland habitats are in poor conservation status across the Mediterranean Member States
- Overall factors that contribute to this are linked to (ecologically) inappropriate water level management (in the context of Mediterranean hydroperiod)
- Maintaining or restoring natural dynamics (morphological and hydrological) should therefore be one of the overarching objectives for their favourable conservation status



Project Scope: Selectd fresh water habitats in Med

- 3170 Med temporary ponds
- 3290 Intermittently flowing Med rivers of the Paspalo-Agrostidion
- 92A0 Salix alba and Populus alba galleries
- 92D0 Riparian galleries and thickets

Dams

Infrastructure development

Tourism development

Urban development /sprawl

Urban sewage

Industrial sewage

Animal sewage

Water pollution from agricultural origin

Unsustainable agriculture

Unsustainable forestry implantation

Unsustainable water

Illegal logging

Project Scope: Selectd fresh water habitats in Med

3170 Med temporary ponds

3290 Intermittently flowing Med rivers of the Paspalo-Agrostidion

92A0 Salix alba and Populus alba galleries

92D0 Riparian galleries and thickets

Longer dry seasons due to CC

Unsustainable grazing

Underground water extraction

Garbage dumping

Invasive non native species

Bush fires

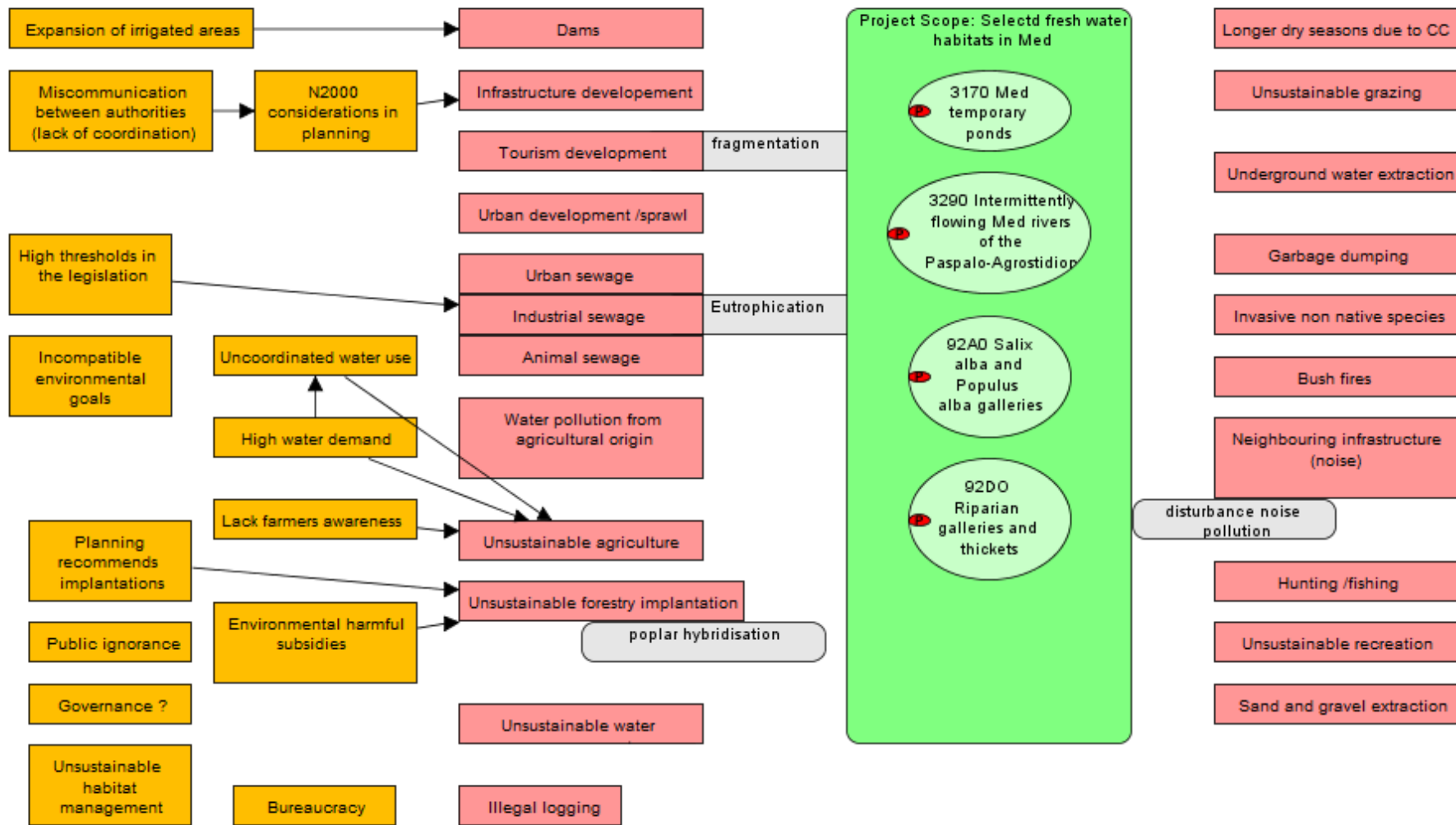
Neighbouring infrastructure (noise)

Hunting /fishing

Unsustainable recreation

Sand and gravel extraction





Selected priority issues / threats

- Inadequate management of water (incl. dams) (quantitative)
- Pollution from agricultural origin
- (Future) land use changes



Issue: Inadequate water management

Solutions:

- Implementation of the EU (nature and related such as WFD) Directives requirements and national laws
- Coordination among the managers and users
- Serious calculation of water balances and ecological demands (using correct methods). Then prioritize the requirements. Remaining water should be prioritized
- Include environmental costs in cost of water
- Restoration of natural hydrological regimes by simulation of natural conditions and hydrological regimes
- Small water storage facilities that help biodiversity (small ponds, reservoirs)
- Use of alternative environmentally friendly water sources that are in



Issue: Pollution from agricultural origin (1 of 2)

Solutions:

- Use crops regionally adjusted
- Evaluate impacts on natural values and monitor agricultural activities and conservation status of natural values (identify sensitive species)
- Define buffer zones around important areas and prevent the use of agro chemicals in these buffers. Improve buffer zone as natural zone. Integrate
- Ensure that legislation is correctly implemented (Pesticide Directive; Conditionality, Rural Development Fund)
- Awareness and education of farmers about legislation and good practices.



Issue: Pollution from agricultural origin (2 of 2)

Solutions:

- Promote good experience sharing and and cooperation between farmers
- Ensure that agricultural funds integrate environmental issues and conservation needs
- Consumer awareness of the quality of products from sustainable agriculture
- Use regional products and implement ecological and regional labelling
- Prevent misused of water resources and plans that are not using water in sustainable way



(Future) land use changes: solutions

Solutions

- Land use planning beforehand, at local and regional, national scale. Integrate habitat types. (WFD, Flood Directive)
- To increase awareness at different levels. Including raising awareness about delimitation of the areas
- Law enforcement. Require that procedures are followed up
- Provide users with alternatives. If I can't put my sheep here, where ?
- Integrate European Landscape Convention with HD Art 10



Session 4: Planning for action



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Inappropriate water management		Increase awareness about WFD & HBD	
Action	Outputs / mechanisms	Who	When / where
Inform or train protected area managers in WFD provisions and water managers in Bird and Habitats Directives	Collect and disseminate through the Natura 2000 Platform existing guidance	1. ECNC	
	Develop new or provide existing training	1. input on content: University of Valencia 2. Coordination: ?	
	Enquire about the EU Commission-led process Expert group on HBD / WFD / MSFD		



Wetlands

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Agricultural pollution		Reduce use pesticides	
Action	Outputs / mechanisms	Who	When / where
Promote the adoption of regionally adapted crops	Writing recommendations and guidelines		



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Agricultural pollution		Reduce use pesticides	
Action	Outputs / mechanisms	Who	When / where
Promote the branding and marketing of regional organic products	Workshop on branding of sustainable regional products in and around Natura 2000 sites	1. Eurosite (explore possibilities to join with planned workshop on the subject)	1. 2015



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Agricultural pollution		Reduce the use of organic chemicals	
Action	Outputs / mechanisms	Who	When / where
Promote the application of Functional agrobiodiversity in Mediterranean River catchments	Disseminate the lessons, guidance from the European Learning Network on Functional agrobiodiversity through the Natura 2000 platform	ECNC	2014
	Organise a workshop on introduction of FAB principles in the Mediterranean	1. Tour du Valat (host) 2. ECNC (support)	2015



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(Future) land use change		Avoid conversion of freshwater habitats	
Action	Outputs / mechanisms	Who	When / where
Inform spatial planning processes to consider conservation of freshwater habitats	Establish formal contacts between Natura 2000 biogeographical process and MedWet initiative to share documents and guidance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tour du Valat (MEdWet) 2. ECNC (platform) 	
	Provide integrated / adaptive management training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conservation coaches / Axios Delta MA 	
	Develop Mediterranean level guidelines for integration of HBD, WFD , MSFD to take full account of each other (e.g. Not only list of N2K sites in WFD)		



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