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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Group of Experts for the setting up  
of the Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest**

**Joint meeting of the Ecological Networks of the Council of Europe  
Dubrovnik (Croatia), 14-15 October 2003**

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**Development of the Emerald Network**

**Implementation of the calendar  
proposed by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention**

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

1. The Group of experts is invited to examine the present document and make recommendations for the development of the Emerald Network along the lines of the calendar adopted by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.
2. These recommendations will be submitted for adoption to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Standing Committee of the Bern Convention in Strasbourg on 1-5 December 2003.

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## 1. Introduction

During its 7<sup>th</sup> meeting held in Riga on 2-3 October 2002, the Group of experts for the setting up of the Emerald Network had a discussion concerning an indicative calendar presented by the Secretariat for the implementation and the development of the Emerald Network. It was then underlined by the Group of experts that setting a calendar with precise targets was fundamental for the development of the network. This calendar was submitted to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention during its 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting held from 2 to 5 December 2002 (see appendix I).

The Standing Committee of the Bern Convention gave its agreement to the indicative calendar, and encouraged Parties to continue national work in setting up the Emerald Network. The Secretariat issued an appeal to the Principality of Monaco, Andorra, Norway and Liechtenstein to join the Emerald Network.

In order to support and monitor the implementation of this indicative calendar, the Secretariat asked the Contracting Parties – and especially the countries which do not belong to the European Union – to report on the action taken so far for the implementation of the Emerald Network.

## 2. Reports submitted by the States

The following States reported to the Secretariat of the Standing Committee: Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (FYROM), Turkey and Ukraine. Full reports are reproduced in Appendix II.

Cyprus, the Czech Republic and Slovakia have precised that they are not implementing the Emerald Network as such, but that all their efforts are oriented to the process of joining the European Union. Therefore, the Emerald Network will be implemented through the process of establishing Natura 2000. Denmark has reported on the implementation of Natura 2000.

### *Albania*

Albania has finished the pilot project phase at the beginning of 2003 and has identified six sites in this process [see report of the pilot project T-PVS/Emerald (2003) 5]. The country intends to carry out the second implementation phase (2003-2004) by identifying at least 30% of the potential ASCIs, including possibly marine habitats and habitats included in the category of protected areas referred to in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan approved by the Albanian Council of Ministers in 2000.

### *Croatia*

An Emerald Network Pilot Project has been implemented in 2002-2003 by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning, in cooperation with the Council of Europe and national experts. The final report will be transmitted to the Secretariat in October 2003.

Amongst the tasks accomplished within this Pilot Project, the Ministry:

- set up a national team of experts
- evaluate the results on presence of the species and habitats listed in Resolution No. 6 (1998) and Resolution No. 4 (1996) within each biogeographical region
- construct a pilot database on potential Emerald sites using the Emerald Software.

A list of habitats types specific for Croatia (karst, marine and some other types) was identified and proposed for inclusion to the existing list of habitats (Resolution No. 4 (1996)). All the marine species from the list of the Barcelona Convention and some other species were also added.

Six potential Areas of special Conservation Interest (ASCIs) have been identified and the data have been collected in order to fill in the Standard Data Form. These selected sites represent 17,12% of the preliminary ecological network and 5,4% of the territory of Croatia. All are protected areas and benefit from adequate management.

### ***Cyprus***

Cyprus is implementing the Emerald Network through the process of establishing Natura 2000. Therefore, by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004, the country has to submit to the European Commission the relevant legislation and the national list of Natura 2000 sites.

In addition to the Pilot Project of the Council of Europe, Cyprus benefited from a Life-Third Countries Project for performing the various tasks relating to the preparation for the implementation of the EU Directives and to collect and evaluate accordingly the information, data and criteria on habitats and species.

As a result of these surveys:

- 15 fauna species, no plant species and 47 habitat types are listed in Annexes of the Habitats Directive;
- 92 birds species are listed in Annex I of the Birds Directives while another 176 protected migratory birds stage in Cyprus;
- 17 flora species and 6 fauna species have been accepted as new additions to Annex II of the Habitats Directive;
- 5 habitats types have been accepted as new additions to Annex I of the Habitats Directive and amendments will be made to the Interpretation Manuel for another 5 habitat type;
- 6 bird species have been accepted as new additions to Annex I of the Birds Directive;
- 1:50.000 digitised habitat maps have been produced for the 38 proposed Natura 2000 sites.

A special effort of public information and education has been made, including distribution of material, organization of seminars, publication of poster, books and articles.

### ***Czech Republic***

The Czech Republic has drafted the national list of sites of the Pannonian region to be delivered to the European Commission in Spring 2004 and the Continental region proposed national list of sites, to be delivered two years later. Therefore, the national authorities consider they are fully in agreement with the calendar proposed by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

### ***Denmark***

Denmark has reported on the extension in the period 2001-2003 of the sites included in Natura 2000 and on the revision of the rules of administration of the Danish Natura 2000.

The Proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) are detailed in the appended report. The report underlines that, in addition to the 194 pSCI designated in 1998 in application of the Habitats Directive, 59 new sites have been designated in 2003 and 41 of the existing sites have been extended. 2 sites have been added in 2003 to the 111 SPA's originally designated in 1994 according to the Birds Directive.

The Danish Government has decided to improve the Danish legislation on the conservation of the designated areas. Proposal for new legislation will be launched no later than the end of 2003.

### ***Georgia***

A Pilot Project has been launched in 2002 in order to start the implementation of the Emerald Network in Georgia, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment and in co-operation with the Noah's Ark Center for the Recovery of Endangered Species (NACRES). The full report of the Pilot Project is available [T-PVS/Emerald (2003) 4].

Georgia is in the process of ratification of the Bern Convention and has taken fully into consideration the provisions of the Convention and in particular Recommendation No. 16 (1989) and Resolution No. 3 (1996). The Emerald Pilot Project is intended to serve as a ground for accelerating the process of accession of Georgia to the Bern Convention and can be used to define more areas of national importance for nature conservation.

Georgia is divided in three biogeographical regions: Alpine, Black Sea, Continental. The national authorities have proposed to add an Anatolian region.

The process of identifying the species and habitats for the designation of ASCIs revealed the problem of lack of information or the need to obtain more recent and credible data. The further work for developing the Emerald Network in Georgia will benefit from the information obtained through the World Bank/GEF Protected Areas Development Project and other programmes concerning protected areas. Many species and potential ASCIs remain however out of the focus of these initiatives. Special assessment activities are required to obtain information on these species and sites. In addition, populations assessment should also focus on their taxonomy to enable subspecies identification.

### ***Slovakia***

Slovakia is currently not implementing the Emerald Network any more. All the capacity of the country is oriented to the approximation process to the European Union and to the implementation of the Natura 2000 network as a prior obligation of the national environmental policy in this field. All relevant data and results gained within the Emerald pilot project are used for the implementation of Natura 2000.

A request is sent to the Standing Committee concerning the updating of the map of biogeographical region and the addition of a third Continental region [see T-PVS/Emerald (2003) 12].

### ***“the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”***

A Pilot Project has been organised in this country in 2002-2003, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. The final report of the pilot project was transmitted to the Secretariat of the Council of Europe in February 2003 [T-PVS/Emerald (2003) 3]. Three Areas of Special Conservation Interest were selected: National Park of Galicica, the Strict Natural Reserve of Ezerani and the Dojran Lake (Monument of nature).

The three designated ASCIs have been included in the Action Plan on the National Biodiversity Strategy, in order to prepare an improved management plans for the National Park of Galicica and the

Strict Nature Reserve of Ezerani and for the revitalization of the Dojran Lake. The national team set up for the pilot project held a meeting for examining the calendar of activities for the next phase of the implementation of the Emerald Network and reviewed the activities undertaken as well as the suggestions for the next steps.

For the next step, the National Team has formulated some proposals in order to cover different types of ecosystems.

### *Turkey*

The national authorities report on the projects developed within the preparatory work for implementing the Birds and Habitats Directives as well as other international obligations. This includes both the transposition of the European legislation into Turkish legislation and the establishment of the structures and pre-conditions at all administrative levels. The various tasks to be fulfilled include:

- creating the conditions for the establishment for the databases, especially the Corine Land Cover classification and a consistent and accessible database on habitats and species ;
- installing the required databases;
- establishing communication and working structures with all involved bodies;
- carrying out extensive training programmes, also on the regional level.

EUNIS Biotop Classification will be carried out in one pilot area and this study will form the basis for the development of the habitat map of Turkey. The data gathered from the ten ASCI's identified during the Emerald Pilot Project implemented in 2000 will be taken into consideration and re-evaluated during this work.

### *Ukraine*

Ukraine has already made the first steps in the development of the Emerald Network, through the Pilot Project launched in 2001. The outcomes of the Project are the following:

- setting up of the National Emerald Team and organisation of the technical Emerald Workshop;
- designation of types of nature conservation areas in Ukraine of national and local level;
- designation of 15 Ukrainian sites as potential ASCIs.

In three biogeographical regions (Alpine, Continental and Steppic), 223 species included in Appendix I of Resolution No. 6 (1998) and 84 endangered natural habitats listed in Resolution No. 4 (1996) were identified.

Progress of the Emerald Network development in Ukraine is one of the issues of the State Programme of Ukraine's National Ecological Network Development for 2000-2015, however with a very limited budget.

All the designated sites are included in the National Protected Areas Network. It is foreseen that the total area of the national Protected Areas Network – which amounts 4,5% of the total area of Ukraine – should increase twice up to 2015.

The steps for the progress of the Emerald Network in Ukraine are the following:

- to continue the identification and designation of ASCIs;
- to enlarge the national protected areas network in view of the Emerald Network criteria;
- to develop the national legislative basis and practice, using the best national and international examples of nature protection management;
- to involve NGOs and national scientists and protected areas managers in the implementation of the Bern Convention and the Emerald Network, in order to improve biodiversity and landscape management.

## Appendix I – Indicative Calendar approved by the Standing Committee at its 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting (2002)

<p>2003-2004</p> <p><b>Phase II.A.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pilot projects for Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia</li> <li>➤ Second implementation phase in all of the countries having carried out a pilot project, aimed to identify at least 30% of the potential ASCIs to be identified;</li> <li>➤ Continuation of the designation of sites in Switzerland and Iceland, which started the network, without going through a pilot project programme;</li> <li>➤ Work on identifying sites in the countries which have not been participating in the pilot project programme: Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco and Norway;</li> <li>➤ Start of verification of the validity of data.</li> </ul>
<p>2005-2006</p> <p><b>Phase II.B.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Identification and designation of all of the potential ASCIs in the Emerald Network in all of the states concerned;</li> <li>➤ Establishment of the national lists;</li> <li>➤ Continuation of verification of the validity of data received;</li> <li>➤ Start of registering of ASCIs and notification to governments.</li> </ul>
<p>2007-2009</p> <p><b>Phase III.A.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Examination and analysis of the scientific data to detect possible gaps;</li> <li>➤ Publication of the lists of the Emerald Network of areas of special conservation interest;</li> <li>➤ Establishment of a first European list of ASCIs;</li> <li>➤ Continuation of unfinished work in phase II;</li> <li>➤ Negotiation with states concerning possible designation of new ASCIs;</li> <li>➤ Start of drafting and implementing management plans for ASCIs.</li> </ul>
<p>2010</p> <p><b>Phase III.B.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Continuation on unfinished work in previous phases;</li> <li>➤ Designation of ASCIs for Emerald Network completed;</li> <li>➤ Update of Resolutions Nos. 4 and 6;</li> <li>➤ Drafting and implementing management plans for 100% of ASCIs.</li> </ul>

## Appendix II - Reports submitted by the States

### I. Albania

#### Summary of the presentation on the national measures taken in Albania for the implementation of the Emerald Network programme on ASCI-s

As a party to the *Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 1979)* that ratified it on 13 January 1999 and in the framework of the Emerald Network program, in 2001 the Council of Europe invited Albania to carry out the Emerald Network pilot project in the country. The project started in April 2002, according to the contract signed on 25 February 2002 between the Ministry of the Environment of Albania and the Council of Europe.

The National team of seven experts was established in April 2002.

The technical workshop was held in Tirana at Mondial Hotel on 22 - 23 April 2002, where experts from the Council of Europe explained the legal framework of the Emerald Network, criteria for selection of ASCI-s and presented relevant Emerald documentation.

The next phase was the compilation by the team of a draft list comprising species listed in Resolution No. 6 (1998) identified in the country and habitats listed in Resolution No. 4 (1996) occurring in the country.

Potential Emerald sites were pre-selected according to the existing information in the country. Seven sites were pre-selected as the base for the Emerald Network (all of them National Parks).

At a later stage the list of potential Emerald sites was slightly changed after expert discussions, taking into account the recommendation that the selected sites should not comprise only National Parks (Protected Areas), but to possibly include different types of habitats from the coastal ones to mountains.

Finally, six sites were selected as Emerald sites namely: Llogora National Park, Tomorri National Park, Pine of Divjaka, Butrinti National Park, Prespa National Park and Allamani area (proposed Strict Nature Reserve).

The compilation of data on habitats and species using all the available information recorded in the country followed the initial phase.

*Referring to the Emerald species*, experts of the team identified 2 taxa of plants and 178 taxa of animals species listed in Resolution No.6 (1998) present in Albania, as species requiring specific habitat conservation measures.

*Regarding the Emerald habitats in Albania* 19 types of endangered natural habitats occurring within the country were identified as listed in Resolution No. 4 (1996).

There are **two bio-geographical regions** in Albania: Mediterranean and Alpine

The table of the Emerald species in Albania according to Resolution No. 6 (1998) is nearly blank; there are only two species of plants from the list identified in Albania (*Marsilia quadrifolia* and *Solenanthes albanicus*). But, there are no data to confirm the presence of these two species in the selected Emerald sites of the project. Meanwhile, a considerable number of endemic, rare or threatened plant species are identified in the framework of the project. These species listed under the title "Other species - Plants".

The final report was compiled and handed together with the scientific data in February 2003.

Albania intends to participate on the second implementation phase (2003-2004) as a country that has carried out the pilot project aiming to identify at least 30 % of the potential ASCI-s. The pilot project was a positive experience for the experts and for the Ministry of the Environment and will serve as a good base for the next project.

In the second project the work of the team of experts will be focused more in areas where little work is done so far e.g. in the field of marine habitats and habitats proposed to be included in a category of protected areas according to the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) approved by the Albanian Council of Ministers in 2000.

A typical example is the designation of Vlora Bay and Shkodra Lake area as protected areas in the near future. Both sites have a considerable extension in respective areas and will be a contribute to the objective of the increase of the protected areas in Albania as stated in BSAP.

Lately in the course of 2003 two important decisions of the Council of Ministers approved regarding the administration of the protected areas as well as the procedures for the designation of a protected area and its buffer zone in the implementation of the law 8906, dated 06.06.2002 "On Protected Areas", will serve the goal of designation of more potential Emerald sites in the country.

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## II. CROATIA

The Emerald Network Pilot Project in Croatia has been implemented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning (MEPPP) in cooperation with the Council of Europe and a number of national experts. It started with the **introductory workshop** that took place in Zagreb from 14-15 February 2002. Mrs Helene Bougessa and Mr Mark Roekhart presented the concept and tasks of the project on behalf of the Council of Europe.

Individual tasks of the project have been accomplished as follows:

- ***Set up a national team of experts***

The national team of experts has been set up, including relevant experts and administrative persons from the MEPPP:

- Tatjana Bakran-Petricioli, Ph D  
Department of Oceanography, Faculty of Natural Science – marine habitats  
Dragan Bukovec, B Sc, Croatian Natural History Museum – geological heritage
- Sven Jelaska, M Sc, OIKON d.o.o. – habitats
- Toni Nikolić, Ph D, Department of Botany, Faculty of Natural Science – flora
- Jasminka Radović, B Sc, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning,  
project coordinator
- Andrea Štefan, B Sc, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning
- Ivan Tikvić, Ph D, Faculty of Forestry – forests
- Jasenka Topić, Ph D, Faculty of Natural Science – terrestrial habitats
- Vesna Tutiš, Ph D, Institute of Ornithology – birds
- Nikola Tvrtković, Ph D, Croatian Natural History Museum – fauna, habitats

- ***Evaluate the results on presence of species and habitats within each biogeographical region in the country***

Members of the expert team have analyzed lists of Emerald species in Resolution No.6 (1998) and Emerald habitats in Resolution No.4 (1996). They extracted species and habitats present in Croatia. Accordingly, the map of biogeographical regions was analyzed.

Following biogeographical regions are present in Croatia:

- Pannonian
- Continental
- Alpine
- Mediterranean.

The expert team concluded that the new region - *Mediterranean Sea* should be added for marine species and habitats.

The next phase of this task was to analyze which species and habitats should be added to the Emerald lists considering some specificities of Croatia. Accordingly, the list of habitat types for Croatia based on CORINE Palearctic habitat classification (T-PVS/Emerald (2001) 10) was revised, trying to include and evaluate some new habitat types specific for Croatia (karst, marine and some other). The proposal for the official revision of this list has been prepared and sent to Mr Pierre and Jean Devillers-Terschuren for comments and possible inclusion to the existing list.

Regarding the expansion of species list, the expert group decided to add following species:

- all known stenoendemic taxa requiring specific conservation measures;
- all vascular plants that belong to Critically Endangered in Croatia (regional IUCN category CR);
- certain animal taxa from IUCN 2002 list requiring specific conservation measures;
- certain other species representatives of threatened habitats in Croatia;
- all marine species from the list of the Barcelona Convention.

- ***Construct a pilot database on potential Emerald sites using the Emerald software***

Potential Areas of Special Conservation Interest were selected according to the criteria of international designation. Six sites have been chosen with total area of 309,867 ha, that makes 17,12% of the preliminary ecological network (1809,750 ha), or 5,47% of the territory of Croatia (5661,500 ha):

- The Plitvice Lakes National Park - *UNESCO World Natural Heritage List*. - 29,482 ha
- The Velebit Mountain Nature Park - UNESCO MAB site - 200,000 ha
- Lonjsko polje and Mokro polje Nature Park - Ramsar site - 50,560 ha
- Kopački rit Nature Park – Ramsar site - 17,700 ha
- Lower Neretva (future nature park) - Ramsar site - 11,500 ha
- Crna Mlaka fishponds ornithological reserve - Ramsar site - 625 ha

For each of the mentioned sites data have been collected in order to fill the special Standard Data Form. Data have been processed using the new Emerald software version 2.0.

As data regarding the distribution of habitat types in Emerald sites were missing, it was decided to wait for the results of the MEPPP project *Mapping of Habitat Types in Croatia*, performed by the private consultant firm OIKON. The project was finished and the GIS map of habitat types (1: 100.000) delivered to the MEPPP in July 2003. This GIS database gave possibility to calculate the area of each mappable habitat type in Croatia. Also, the GIS map of protected areas has been added in order to get maps of habitat types for each Emerald site and to compare the area of each Resolution 4 habitat type present in Emerald sites with its overall distribution in Croatia. Lists of additional important habitat types except the Resolution 4 ones have been entered too, because a lot of habitats specific and important for Croatia (specially karst and marine ones) are missing in the Resolution 4.

As all six Emerald sites are protected areas with their respective management authorities, the filled-in forms have been sent to them in September for checking data. After receiving their comments and possible revision of database, the final report with database and maps will be sent to the Council of Europe in October 2003.

**JASMINKA RADOVIC, B SC**  
**MEPPP, Project coordinator**

### III. CYPRUS

(a) As it was previously agreed between the Council of Europe and EU accession countries, the Emerald Network will be implemented through the process of establishing “Natura 2000” sites.

(b) To this respect, we are systematically working towards that direction. Our commitment to the European Commission is to have, by 1.5.2004, the relevant legislation and to submit our national list of “Natura 2000” sites.

(c) The following tasks have been performed so far within the framework of a LIFE-Third Countries Project:

(i) The principal objective of the project, that is the provision of the information needed for the creation of the “Natura 2000” Network in Cyprus and thus the preparation for the implementation of the Directive 92/43/EEC in Cyprus, has been secured through the achievement of specific (intermediate) objectives.

(ii) The first group of objectives was the basis of the project, because it included the collection and evaluation of data which would provide the criteria for site selection, that is lists of habitats and species of Annex I and Annex II of the Habitats’ Directive and of birds of Annex I of the Birds’ Directive. It included the review of all existing data, literature or other, on the habitats and flora and fauna species of Cyprus and also additional surveys, as needed, for distribution, conservation status and populations trends. In general, published data and unpublished information (i.e., from running scientific investigations) provided adequate information on species’ distribution (except invertebrates) but information on population trends and conservation status was based on experts’ opinion. Published information on habitats did not satisfy the needs of the project and additional field work, mainly on habitat identification and distribution, was carried out. The project teams provided data (datasheets) and organized the representation of Cyprus to the seminars for “Amendments to the annexes of the Birds and Habitats Directives” (ENV.D.2 – Nature protection, coastal zones and tourism and ENV. B2 – Nature and Biodiversity).

(iii) In summary the results of the surveys are:

- 15 fauna species, no plant species and 47 habitat types that occur in Cyprus are listed in Annexes of the Habitats Directive
- 92 bird species that occur in Cyprus and are listed in Annex I of the Birds’ Directive while another 176 protected migratory birds stage in Cyprus
- 17 flora species and 6 fauna species have been accepted as new additions to Annex II of the Habitats’ Directive
- 5 habitat types have been accepted as new additions to Annex I of the Habitats’ Directive and amendments will be made to the Interpretation Manual ‘EUR 15) for another 5 habitat types
- 6 bird species have been accepted as new additions to Annex I of the Birds’ Directive
- 1:50.000 digitised habitat maps (Annex I and non Annex I) have been produced for 38 proposed “Natura 2000” sites

(iv) The second group of objectives was central to the project, since it was the establishment of a national list of proposed “Natura 2000” sites. Several work meetings throughout the project resulted in a final list of 38 proposed sites taking under consideration the data provided by the results of previous work. The selected sites are supported by completed Standard Data Forms and by 1:50.000 topographic maps with site delimitation. Two workshops (midterm and close to the end of the project) attempted to ensure the general acceptance of the proposed sites by the relevant authorities of Cyprus and resulted in few modifications in site delimitation. Of course, the official acceptance and proposal to the EU of the National list of “Natura 2000” site by the Cyprus authorities was outside the scope of the project.

(v) Data compilation in a format compatible with EU standards was implemented by BIOCYPRUS, an MS Access database, which includes the Standard Data Forms and lists of Cyprus Annex and non-Annex habitats and flora and fauna species. BIOCYPRUS will be the basis for a national archive of ecological data for Cyprus. In addition, all phytosociological data collected have been recorded in a TURBOVEG database.

(vi) Dissemination of results targeting public information and education and the acceptance of the “Natura 2000” network included mainly distribution of informative material and organization of seminars. Three day-long informative and educational seminars with the participation of civil servants, local authorities, educators, NGO’ and the public were held at the beginning, midterm and at the end of the project. Pamphlets, a poster and a map of the proposed “Natura 2000” sites in Cyprus have been produced and distributed. The book of results of the project with summarized information on each site and also articles analyzing the results on habitats, flora and fauna is under publication. This book along with a CD with the database BIOCYPRUS will be distributed to the Ministries of Cyprus, NGOs, local authorities and schools and will be available to everybody interested. In addition, two informative articles were published at the bimonthly journal of the Greek Centre of Biotopes-Wetlands (EKBY). Also, the Habitats Directive and the project were presented in 2 TV broadcasts.

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#### IV. DENMARK

In the period 2001-2003 Denmark have extended the network of Natura 2000 Sites and revised the rules of administration accordingly.

##### **Proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI)**

The 194 pSCI's were originally designated in 1998 according to the Habitats Directive. By midsummer 2003 41 of the sites have been extended, 59 new sites have been designated and there is an ongoing process regarding the demarcation of two sites – one modification and one new site.

The total area of the pSCI's has thus been increased by a total of 879 km<sup>2</sup> being 294 km<sup>2</sup> terrestrial areas and 585 km<sup>2</sup> marine areas. For the updated figures see Table 1 below.

##### **Special Protection Areas (SPA)**

The 111 SPA's were originally designated in 1994 according to the Birds Directive. By midsummer 2003 2 of the sites have been extended, 1 new site has been designated and there is an ongoing process regarding the demarcation of one new site.

The total area of the SPA's has thus been increased by a total of 2485 km<sup>2</sup> marine areas. For the updated figures see Table 2 below.

##### **Nature 2000 sites in common**

Most of the designated pSCI's have an overlap with the SPA's. However, there are sites, which are designated purely as pSCI's respectively SPA's.

This means that the total area of Natura 2000 is not equivalent to the sum of the total area of pSCI's and the total area of SPA's. A total of 2179 km<sup>2</sup> of the terrestrial Natura 2000 areas are designated as pSCI's and SPA's, while 993 km<sup>2</sup> purely are designated as pSCI's and 418 km<sup>2</sup> purely are designated as SPA's. A total of 7028 km<sup>2</sup> of the marine Natura 2000 areas are designated as pSCI's and SPA's, while 935 km<sup>2</sup> purely are designated as pSCI's and 2621 km<sup>2</sup> purely are designated as SPA's. The updated figures on the total areas by midsummer 2003 of Natura 2000 are shown in Table 3 below.

##### **Legislation**

The rules for the administration of the Danish Natura 2000 is set up in the Executive Order No. 477 of 7 June 2003 on the Demarcation and Administration Of International Protection Areas. The Executive Order has entered into force on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2003. The Executive Order implements the rules of the Habitats Directive. However analyses of the legal implementation have shown some deficiencies in the Danish implementation. The Danish Government has decided to improve the Danish legislation on the conservation of the designated areas. Proposals for new legislation will be launched ultimo 2003.

**Table 1-3**

<b>Table 1. 253 Sites of Community Importance (Habitats Directive)</b>			
	Area km <sup>2</sup>	Share %	
Terrestrial	3172	7,4 28,5	Of the surface area of Denmark Of the total area of SCI's
Marine	7963	7,5 71,5	Of the marine area of Denmark Of the total area of SCI's
In total	11135	78,6	Of the total area of Natura 2000

<b>Table 2. 112 Special Protection Areas (Birds Directive)</b>			
	Area km <sup>2</sup>	Share %	
Terrestrial	2596	6,1 21,2	Of the surface area of Denmark Of the total area of SPA's
Marine	9649	9,1 78,8	Of the marine area of Denmark Of the total area of SPA's
In total	12245	86,4	Of the total area of Natura 2000

<b>Table 3. Natura 2000 Sites in common</b>			
	Area km <sup>2</sup>	Share %	
Terrestrial	3590	8,4 25,3	Of the surface area of Denmark Of the total area of Natura 2000
Marine	10584	10,0 74,7	Of the marine area of Denmark Of the total area of Natura 2000
In total	14174		

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## **V. GEORGIA**

### **Introduction**

In February of 2002 Georgia was invited by Council of Europe to join the Emerald process by taking part in the Emerald Network pilot project. Georgia being a country in the process of ratification of the Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats), has taken fully into consideration provisions of the Convention and following the Recommendation #16 (1989) and Resolution #3 (1996) has started up the Emerald Network.

The overall objective of this project was to develop a pilot database, containing the fair proportion of the Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCI) and submit the proposal of the selected sites to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

The pilot project will serve as a ground for accelerating the process of accession of Georgia to the Bern Convention and can be used to define more areas of national importance for nature conservation.

### **Framework of the Pilot Project**

Framework of the pilot project is defined by contract No 48/ 2002 as follows:

1. set up a national team of experts related to the development of the Emerald Network. This team should comprise technical, administrative and scientific persons;
2. organise a workshop, during which the above-mentioned team will be initiated to the Emerald principles and technicalities by the staff and the expert of the Council of Europe. In this work the Emerald Network Software will be installed and explained together with instructions concerning the scientific background of data collection;
3. evaluate the results on presence of species and habitats within each biogeographical region in the country;
4. construct a pilot database on real sites, which will eventually become Emerald sites using the Emerald Software.

### **Establishing National Team**

The national Emerald Network project team was formed immediately after the project contract was signed and in April 2002 first meeting was held at the Ministry of Environment of Georgia in Tbilisi.

The core group of national team consists of 10 people representing technical, scientific and administrative experts and institutions with various backgrounds. The project co-ordinator and administrator are representatives of the Ministry of the Environment, which is responsible for project implementation.

### **National legislative framework for biodiversity conservation**

Special environmental legislation, such as Law on Environmental Protection, Law on Protected Areas, Law on wild fauna and the Forest code represent the core of the national legislative framework for biodiversity conservation in Georgia.

### **Short overview of Georgia's biological diversity**

Georgia is remarkably rich in various types of natural ecosystems and habitats and is an important bridge between Europe and Asia, as well as Northern and Southern Palearctic.

Georgia's ecosystems include subalpine coniferous forests and alpine meadows, wetlands, peat bogs and lakes, coniferous and beech forests, oak woodlands and mixed deciduous forests, caves and mountain gorges, Colkhetti wetlands forests and sclerophilous forests with evergreen undergrowth, Mediterranean and sub-Mediterranean communities, steppe grasslands, arid light woodlands, riparian shrub and forest vegetation along rivers and marine systems along the Black Sea coast.

Of all 4 500 species of vascular plants found in Georgia, 380 (9%) are endemic of country and 600 (14.2%) endemic of the Caucasus. The vertebrate fauna of the country includes: 84 species of freshwater fish, 13 species of amphibians, 53 of reptiles, 350 of birds and 109 of mammals.

### **Biogeographical zones in Georgia**

According to the map of biogeographical regions adopted by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention in December 1997 three regions were identified in Georgia (Alpine, Black Sea, Continental) At the workshop in May 2002, new more accurate borders of biogeographical regions in Georgia were discussed with the consultant and one more region namely Anatolian was proposed in addition to the three regions identified by the above map.

### **Lessons Learnt**

The process of species and habitats assessment as well as the workshop for the identification of Emerald Sites in Georgia have revealed the following problems:

- Many sites that on the basis of preliminary assessment are likely to qualify for ASCI were not designated due to lack of information; further detailed studies are needed to obtain more recent and credible data;
- Due to lack of information on populations, many Georgian species and subspecies have not been included in the Emerald List of Species. (In many cases Georgian populations represent distinct subspecies that are endemic to country or the Region (Caucasus), hence they are different from European subspecies. As a result endemic subspecies of Georgia are not listed);
- The process of species listing was difficult due to (i) lack of data bases and (ii) lack of information on intraspecific taxonomy of Georgian populations.

### **Follow-up activities**

Further work for developing the Emerald Network in Georgia will greatly benefit from the information obtained through the World Bank/GEF Protected Areas Development Project and other ongoing programmes targeted at protected areas. Many species and potential ASCI's however remain out of the focus of these initiatives. Special assessment activities are required to obtain information on these species and sites. In addition populations assessment should also focus on their taxonomy to enable subspecies identification.

## **VI. “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”**

The contract for the pilot-project has been signed by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning in February 2002. The report for realization of the pilot-project both with the filled software were sent to the Council of Europe in February 2003. According to the criteria of international designation, three ASCI were selected: Galicica (National Park), Ezerani (Strict Natural Reserve) and Dojran Lake (Monument of Nature).

National Emerald Team held a meeting with purpose to make an overview on the calendar of activities for the next phase of the implementation of Emerald Network, activities undertaken in the Republic of Macedonia in the designated sites as well as suggestions for our next steps.

With regard to the calendar of activities, which was overviewed in details, the National Emerald Team has clarified the possibility for Republic of Macedonia to take part in the frame of the calendar. We have to underline the urgent need to start preparation activities for the second phase as well as to provide financial means.

In the period from the finalisation of the pilot-project, the Republic of Macedonia has undertaken the following activities within the designated sites:

- All three sites were included in the frame of the Action Plan on the National Biodiversity Strategy (preparation of improved management plans for NP Galicica and SNR Ezerani, revitalization of Dojran Lake etc.).

The implementation of the I phase of the project "Dojran Lake Salvation" is ongoing for bringing additional amounts of water from the Gjavato wells. On 5-6 June 2003 the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning in cooperation with the municipality of Old Dojran organized a project "Campaign for Dojran Lake Salvation", financed by UNESCO. We have chosen to commence with the Campaign on Dojran Lake exactly on this 5 June in order to mark, at the same time, the World Day of Environment in the year of 2003, declared as an "International Year of Fresh Waters".

- Bird Study and Protection Society of Macedonia, as a management body of the SNR Ezerani, manages and takes care of the protection and conservation of the natural biotopes and biocenoses; protection of the structural characteristics of the landscape diversity; continuous monitoring of the state of the protected flora and fauna species and prevent the introduction of alien flora and fauna species. According to the Agreement made with the PE Vodostopanstvo of Macedonia, activities for revitalization of the Prespa Lake coastal area have started, a guarding (ranger) service was established to take care of the reserve protection with appropriate spatial plan approach for rational use of the natural wealth and bioresources, preventing the inappropriate use of the natural wealth.

- The NGO MAKMONTANA has realized the project "Autochthonous/native dendroflora in NP Galicica" in the NP Galicica, financed by GTZ. After finishing the project, the exhibition material was handed over to the National Park Management. A pilot-project "Demarcation of the educational-recreational path in NP Galicica" has started in the frames of the Project on Ohrid Lake Protection. As part of the project "Strengthening the Capacities of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning" – in Component II "Public environmental awareness raising, improving the communication and environmental monitoring" a training seminar for park guardians/keepers, tourist guides and representatives of tourist agencies is planned for the purpose of communicating with the visitors.

Having in mind that for part of the data in the Emerald software, for all three ASCI localities there are not sufficient scientific knowledges, the need of additional scientific researches emerges. Their realization is certainly related to finances.

Regarding the next phase of development for the Emerald network in RM, a discussion was held and proposals were given for several possible localities. Thus, the main objective of the National team was to cover different types of ecosystems. The choice of the future ASCI-localities shall be made after detailed review of the existing literature and not published data, coming from already conducted scientific researches.

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## **VII. TURKEY**

I would like to kindly give you some information about the Twinning Covenant Project which has been created through Twinning Covenant TR02 – EN-01 within the "Capacity Building in the Field of Environment for Turkey, Component 3 Nature" Project. The immediate objective of the project is to prepare the implementation of the European nature conservation Directives, namely the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) as well as the CITES Convention and related European Regulations. This includes both, the transposition of the European legislation into Turkish legislation as well as the establishment of respective structures and pre-conditions at all administrative levels.

To achieve the objectives mentioned above action is required in the following fields:

- Creating the conditions for the establishment of the necessary databases, especially the Corine Land Cover classification and a consistent and accessible database on habitats and species
- Fulfilling technical requirements for the installation of the required databases
- Establishing communication and working structures that overcome spread responsibilities and guarantee the co-ordination of the involved bodies
- Carrying out extensive training programmes to spread knowledge and experience also on the regional level, the future implementing level.

EUNIS Biotop Classification will be carried out in one pilot area in the context of the Twinning Project. This study will form the basis for the development of the Habitat Map of Turkey.

While the studies in the context of the Twinning Project are being carried out, the data gathered from the ten pilot sub-projects of Emerald Network Project, which was done in 2000 with the financial assistance of European Council, will be taken into attention and re-evaluated.

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## VIII. UKRAINE

### PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS OF THE EMERALD NETWORK DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE

Ukraine has already made the first steps in development of elements of the Emerald Network of Europe. The Emerald Network Pilot Project with the support of the Council of Europe, which was realized in 2001, greatly promoted this. Outcomes of the Project are the following:

- Foundation of the National Emerald team;
- Technical Emerald Network workshop;
- Designation of types of nature conservation areas in Ukraine of national and sub-national (local) levels (see Table 1)
- Designation of the 15 Ukrainian sites as potential ASCIs (see Table 2).

In 3 biogeographical regions<sup>1</sup> (Alpine, Continental and Steppe) of Ukraine it was identified 223 species included into Appendix 1 of Resolution 6 (1998) and 84 endangered natural habitats according to Resolution 4 (1996) (see Tables 3 and 4). It is necessary to mention, that the list of endangered plant species for Ukraine is too short (37 species), although the Red Data Book of Ukraine includes 541 species of plants (against 382 species of animals<sup>2</sup>). Many species of the Bern Convention (5 plants, 6 mammals, 83 birds, 1 reptile, 4 amphibians, 6 fishes and 8 invertebrates) from Resolution 6 (1998) are not entered the Red Data Book of Ukraine. Concerning endangered natural habitats, in Ukraine there are no analogue of such type of legal document and the one exception is only the Green Data Book of typical and rare plant communities of Ukraine. Unfortunately, Ukrainian scientists almost don't use the Palearctic habitat classification that also applies the brake to Ukraine's activities in the Bern Convention.

The mentioned disparities are explaining first of all because Ukrainian scientists, especially botanists, were not involved in development of the Lists of endangered species and habitats of the Bern Convention, and also, that Ukrainian party, in a whole, is not included sufficiently in process of the Bern Convention implementation.

Progress of the Emerald Network development in Ukraine is one of issues of the State Program of Ukraine's National Ecological Network Development for Years 2000-2015, however total budget of this Program is very limited (less than 7 Mln. Euro), almost fifth part of means it is necessary to obtain from the international funds.

All designated sites are the objects of national Protected Areas Network – in 13 Nature Reserves and National Nature Parks. Ukraine has enough developed network of protected areas. On 01.01.2003 there were 7,087 units with the total area of 2,718,281 ha in its composition. This makes 4.5% of total area of Ukraine. The Protected Areas Network of Ukraine includes 17 (strict) Nature Reserves (Zapovidnyks), 12 National Nature Parks, 4 Biosphere Reserves, 292 Wildlife Reserves (Zakaznyks) of national importance, 44 Regional Landscape Parks, 2,308 Wildlife Reserves (Zakaznyks) and 2,897 Nature Monument and 773 Reserve Stows of local importance, as well as artificial protected areas (132 Parks-monuments of Garden-park Arts, 19 and 19 Dendrological Gardens, 17 and 5 Botanical Gardens and 7 and 5 Zoos) correspondingly of national and local importance. Total area of the Ukraine's Protected Areas Network should increase twice up to 2015. This will allow considerably surely protect endangered flora and fauna species, although already now the Protected Areas Network contains all defined endangered species of flora and fauna, and habitat types from Resolution 6 (1998) and 84 endangered natural habitats according to Resolution 4 (1996).

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<sup>1</sup> Some Ukrainian scientists mention for Ukraine the Pannonic biogeographical region too.

<sup>2</sup> *Ursus arctos* has been included into the Red Data Book of Ukraine this year.

National protected areas are under protection in accordance with the Law 'On Protected Areas Network of Ukraine' (1992), but level of their protection is not equal. Nature Reserves, Biosphere Reserves, National Nature Parks and 21 Regional Landscape Parks have special administrations numbering 4-247 specialists. Administrative functions are not enough distinct in national legislation, considerable place have purely protected and economic functions and insufficient attention is paid to the environment monitoring and cooperation with local population. Practice of biodiversity and landscape management seldom uses the best management examples in Europe and the whole world.

Natural values of protected areas without administrations, where natural resources users are responsible institutions for nature protection, through lack of interest to nature protection, especially, because of absence of compensatory damage and other incentive measures, as well as land privatization with infringement, are less conserved.

Ratification of many nature protection conventions and agreements did not become occasion for changes of national legislation. In particular, the national list of endangered species has not been enlarged, such category as „area of special conservation interest” according to the Bern Convention has not been implemented. At the same time, it is of priority for all valid for Ukraine conventions and agreements (Article 71 of the Law of Ukraine on Environment, 1991).

Analysis of legal supplying and nature protection practice testifies, that exactly elements of the Ukraine's Protected Areas Network should be nominated to the Emerald Network of Europe. First of all to the Emerald Network should be nominated that protected areas, where the Administrations exist (Nature and Biosphere Reserves, National Nature Parks and some Regional Landscape Parks), and also that, which are without administrations, where there is guarantee of conservation of natural properties of 'special interest conservation' (see Resolution No 4 (1996) and No 6 (1998)). Identification of the areas of special conservation interest should be carried out on the whole area of the country, but before presenting of nominations to include it into the Emerald Network it is desirable to get the national status of protected area categories. This will allow protecting surely endangered species of flora and fauna, and habitats.

What are the backgrounds concerning the individual protected areas to be included into the Emerald Network of Europe? In connection with this, it was conducted the preliminary analysis (on the background of existing data), which showed the following.

According to the Cadastre of Protected Areas of Ukraine in each from 33 Nature and Biosphere Reserves, and National Nature Parks, including 13 nominated, one can meet not less than 10 endangered species entered the Appendix 1 of the Resolution 6 (1998), as in the majority of them are endangered habitats. So, globally endangered species as *Lutra lutra*, *Ursus arctos*, *Crex crex* and *Grus grus* one can meet accordingly in 20, 6, 16 and 17 reserves and parks, as well as the range of other protected areas of lower rank. For many protected areas of the Alpine (Carpathian) biogeographical region Beech forests, Carpathian sub-alpine spruce and caves are peculiar, in the Continental region - Transition mires, Oak-hornbeam forests, in the Steppe region - Continental steppes, as well as in coastal zones - Soft sediment littoral communities, Sea-grass meadows, Estuaries, etc. are characteristic.

So, still 20 existing protected areas of national importance with administrations (35 separate areas, as part of them consist of several distant from one to another enough valuable parts) are top-priority sites for designation as potential ASCIs. Besides, over 30 National Nature Parks and Nature Reserves will be established to the end of 2015.

Also there is interest of the Regional Landscape Parks administrations to participate in the Emerald Network development, majority of which on their areas (area from 300 to 88,000 hectares) include endangered species and endangered habitats.

There are not less than 100 other protected areas without administrations, where in accordance with existing data from the Cadastre of Protected Areas of Ukraine, there exist properties of European interest conservation and, in general, there are guarantees for conservation of these values, but in passive regime (conducting of periodical control for conservation of ecological inspectors together

with scientists). Unfortunately, huge potential (from the experience of countries of Western Europe) concerning participation of NGOs in nature protection issues in Ukrainian realities, is not opening enough.

So, the steps of Ukraine for progress of the Emerald Network are the following:

- to continue identification and designation of ASCIs;
- to enlarge the national protected areas network in view of the Emerald Network criteria;
- to develop national legislative basis and practice using the best national and international examples of <sup>2</sup> nature protection management;
- to make more active of national scientists and managers for the Bern Convention development;
- to involve NGOs for biodiversity and landscape management.

For the prospective, stimulus for the more essential steps on this way might be obtaining of Ukraine of associative membership in the European Union and assuming, in particular, concrete obligations concerning realization of program NATURA 2000. This will allow improving national legislation, to fill up the Red Data Book of Ukraine with species of the Emerald Network (NATURA 2000) interest, legalize conservation of endangered habitats in Europe.

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