Linking Natural and Cultural Heritage

Activities under the EU Nature Action Plan focusing on Natura 2000 and cultural heritage

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Natura 2000 and cultural heritage

• Cultural landscapes: "the combined works of nature and man"

• Ecosystems in N2000 sites often result from interaction with human activity (e.g. extensive agriculture) or depend on it.

• Many species and habitats with cultural significance

• Significant spatial overlap of cultural and N2000 heritage - sites with multiple designations

• Biodiversity and cultural assets often subject to same threats, hence need integrated management

A question of shared heritage and values of society!
Integrated management of Natura 2000 & cultural sites

- Linking cultural assets and Natura 2000 sites can:
  - Improve communication, awareness, education
  - Enhance public support and community engagement
  - Establish effective management schemes and measures
  - Increase synergies of financing sources
  - Maximise potential of sites to deliver their benefits for people and nature

- Protection afforded to cultural assets can benefit nature conservation

- Opportunities offered by N2000
EU Action Plan for nature, people and the economy

Priority D: Better communication and outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders and communities

Support recognition of good management of Natura 2000 sites and awareness-raising of the Nature Directives through relevant fora, availing of new technologies and outreach activities, and strengthen links between natural and cultural heritage, especially in the context of 2018 as European Year of Cultural Heritage.
The scoping study - 2015

**Context:** Declaration of Stymphalia (2014) and Charter of Rome.

**Objective:** review of links and complementary between nature and culture with a focus on linking N2000 and cultural assets through a scoping exercise to identify how the different policies might better support each other and which are the possible funding opportunities available.

Scoping study on the review of links and complementary between Natura 2000 and cultural sites

The case studies - 2017

**Context:** growing awareness of the advantages of linking biodiversity and cultural heritage.

**Objective:** showcasing a series of case studies from across the EU that would represent different aspects of linking N2000/biodiversity and cultural heritage.

A case study: Matera, Italy, where culture and nature live side by side

The Italian city of Matera is famous for its Sassi (literally “stones”), a peculiar system of dwellings and churches carved into the rock, inhabited since the Paleolithic age. The City is both a World Heritage Site and part of the Natura 2000 Network.

Two very rare bird species, the Lesser kestrel (*Falco naumanni*) and the Lanner falcon (*Falco biarmicus*), nest under the Sassi roofs and work is underway to conserve these colonies. New standards have also been set in the construction regulations to ensure the use of raptor friendly roof tiles and cavities in buildings, thanks to integrated management planning.
Objectives:

1. Evaluate the spatial overlaps between Natura 2000 and cultural heritage areas.

2. Identify and analyse areas of synergy between nature and culture and key elements of success for an integrated approach.
Designation overlaps: Natura 2000 and UNESCO cultural World Heritage Sites

- The overlaps between cultural World Heritage and Natura 2000 are larger than one would expect
- Of the 336 unique cultural World Heritage Sites in the EU, 49 (or almost 15%) are located in or directly border a Natura 2000 site
- 142 sites (or 42%) are located within walking distance (2 km radius)
Of 34 unique natural- and mixed cultural-natural World Heritage Sites in the EU, 32 are at least partly designated under the EU Birds- and Habitats Directives.

Of these 32, all but one Natura 2000 designations fully or largely overlapped with the entire World Heritage Site designation.

Example: Dolomites (IT) where nearly the entire UNESCO site is designated Natura 2000 area too.
Many other overlaps.

Example: EU Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra award winners

- Nearly half of EU Cultural Heritage Conservation Award laureates are located within walking distance of Natura 2000

- Out of 116 laureates since 2009, 18 are located inside or directly bordering Natura 2000, 49 laureates are within a 2km radius

- Left: Greek laureates 2009-2016, with cut out restoration of Lassithi Plateau’s Windmills, Crete in Dikti SAC (GR4320002)
Many other overlaps.

- EU Natura 2000 Awards

- 21st of May EU Natura 2000 Day

#Natura2000

#LIFEProgramme
Common threats:
Ancient city of Nessebar (BG) World Heritage Site in Natura 2000
Common threats: Ancient city of Nessebar (BG) UNESCO cultural World Heritage Site

- Housing
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation
- Management systems/ management plan
- Marine transport infrastructure

Natura 2000 two most recorded high threats & pressures:
- Urbanisation, residential and commercial development
- Recreation and leisure development

...And no management plans(s) in place!
Common opportunities:
Schloss Eggenberg (Styria, AT)
Cultural World Heritage Site

- World Heritage since 1999 and the last known remaining wintering site in Austria of the highly-threatened Greater Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) protected under the EU Habitats Directive
- In 2015 the castle and its gardens were designated as a Natura 2000 site to protect the bat species
Common opportunities: Schloss Eggenberg (AT)

• Conservation Order of 09 July 2015 set management measures into law, obliging site managers to both improve castle and park

• Presence of bats now embraced as an opportunity to bring different audiences to the site, and its protection integrated in cultural site management
Identify and analyse areas of synergy and key elements of success

The aim of the task is to examine **potential synergies** and opportunities to foster the integrated management of natural and cultural heritage in order to generate economic **benefits** and **employment** opportunities, as well as for supporting **investment** in Natura 2000 areas through public and private funding, including relevant EU funds.

The task included two phases:

1- Classification

2 - Assessment and description
Thank you!
