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## Report

**on the changes in the creation  
of the Natura 2000 network in Poland  
and important events  
related to the functioning of the network in Poland  
in the period between March 2011 and March 2012**

### Introduction

- I. The state of the Natura 2000 network in Poland and in Europe in the first quarter of 2011 – when the elaboration of the previous report was finished
- II. Key events and decisions related to the creation of the Natura 2000 network in Poland and the EU during the last year (from III 2011 to III 2012) and the state of the Natura 2000 network at the beginning of 2012.
- III. Further events related to the creation of the Natura 2000 network in Poland and the EU
- IV. Functioning of the Natura 2000 network in Poland – various initiatives and projects
- V. Institutions responsible for Natura 2000 areas in Poland
- VI. Materials used for the elaboration of this report
- VII. List of useful sources of information about Natura 2000

### Introduction



This report (which is already the third one), just like the previous one<sup>1</sup> has been prepared under the project “The open waters of Natura 2000” carried out by the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) in 2010-2012 with the financial support of the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management. Its main goal is to gather and present the changes in the issues related to the implementation of the European Ecological Network Natura 2000 in Poland since the publication of the previous report (1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2011), which served as a base for updating and completing the content of “Natura 2000 and tourism” web portal ([www.natura2000.org.pl](http://www.natura2000.org.pl)) in 2011.

This report – apart from documenting the ongoing changes and recording the key events related to the implementation of the Natura 2000 network in Poland – was supposed to show whether it was necessary to update the content of the portal again. The portal needs to be updated on a regular basis in order to be able to fulfil its educational and informational role (and the creation of the Natura 2000 network is undergoing constant changes), therefore the preparation of this report included the use of media monitoring, necessary corrections in the contents of the portal, as well as preparation of short notes about the most important events to be published online in the News section.

In addition to that, the report is aimed at providing current, collective information about the state of implementation of the Natura 2000 network in Poland and the available sources of information about the network and its management to the portal readers interested in the issue.

## **I. The state of the Natura 2000 network in Poland and in Europe in the first quarter of 2011 – when the elaboration of the previous report was finished**

The creation of the European Ecological Network Natura 2000 in the European Union started in 1992 when the Habitat Directive<sup>2</sup> was adopted, and as it was previously planned it was supposed to be ready (in the “old” EU countries) by 2000 – hence the name. Another act important for the creation of the network is the Bird Directive<sup>3</sup> from 1979, because the important bird areas designated under this directive have been included in the Natura 2000 network as a separate type of Natura 2000 areas. All new EU member countries were obliged to prepare network suggestions in

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<sup>1</sup> „The report on the changes in the creation of the Natura 2000 network in Poland in the period 2009-2011” by Bożenna Wójcik, prepared in March 2011 is available on the web portal „Natura 2000 and tourism in the „Publications” section.

<sup>2</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, also known as the Habitats Directive

<sup>3</sup> Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (this is the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended), also known as the Birds Directive

their territories until the day of their accession, i.e. until 1 May 2004 in case of the ten countries including Poland, and until 1 January 2007 in case of Romania and Bulgaria who joined the EU on that date. None of those countries managed to present complete lists of areas in time, therefore the process of the network creation became much longer. It is assumed that, in broad outline, the process was not finished until the beginning of 2011. The proposals of many countries (from both the old and the new EU) had been assessed very critically by the European Commission, so in some cases the resolution of the conflicts between the European Commission and the governments of member countries included the participation of the European Court of Justice, which stimulated the countries to progress in the designation of Natura 2000 areas.

In the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2011 there were 144 bird sites officially approved in Poland, 7 of which also have the status of habitat sites. That was due to the Ordinance of the minister of Environment of 12 January 2011 on Special Protection Areas for Birds, published in 4 February 2011. Bird sites include three marine sites, covering not only the coastal waters of the Baltic Sea but also offshore fragments of the Baltic Sea within the Polish jurisdiction, i.e. so called Ławica Słupska.

At the beginning of 2011 in Poland we also had 823 officially approved habitat sites, i.e. Sites of Community Importance, 778 of which are from the Continental Biogeographical Region and 45 from the Alpine Biogeographical Region. Seven of those areas also had the status of bird sites<sup>4</sup>. It was the consequence of extending the Natura 2000 network in the whole European Union with new habitat sites, approved by the European Commission by means of the decision announced on 10 January 2011. The decision concerned six out of nine inland<sup>5</sup> biogeographical regions of the EU, including the continental and alpine regions, in which Natura 2000 areas are designated in Poland. Two habitat sites are marine sites and their scope partially or wholly overlaps with the scope of bird sites.

In addition to that, at the beginning of 2011 there were in Poland numerous high nature value areas from the habitat site category, which had not been officially approved – those were the areas proposed in May 2010 by naturalists as part of the Shadow Lists 2010. As part of that list organisations opted for 33 new areas and the extension of 22 already approved ones. In 2010 and at the beginning of 2011 there were still examined by the government expert teams and consulted by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection in terms of its inclusion in the official lists, but those proceedings did not lead to presenting the European Commission with a new list of officially proposed sites.

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<sup>4</sup> Therefore, by adding bird sites and habitat sites we do not get the total amount of Natura 2000 sites in Poland – these 7 sites would be counted twice.

<sup>5</sup> In the EU there are also marine biogeographical regions – these are the individual seas – in Poland it is the biogeographical region of the Baltic Sea (MBAL).

According to the information prepared by the Environment GD and published in spring 2011, in January 2011 the Natura 2000 coverage percentage for Poland was higher than the EU average – 19,9% in Poland, versus about 17% in the European union (the countries that are most covered by Natura 2000 are Slovenia and Bulgaria). The share of forests in the Polish Natura 2000 is similar to the majority of EU countries. 22% of the Baltic Sea under Polish jurisdiction has been included in the network (which gives us the third position in the EU just after Germany and Belgium).

When the previous report was about to be finished it was not possible to present the number of Natura 2000 areas in the whole European Union at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2011. The Commission has not announced the cumulative data yet. The figures presented in that report were from May 2010 with regard to bird sites (according to the Natura 2000 Barometer from December 2010)

and from January 2011 with regard to habitat sites – this data were presented according to the European Commission announcement about the Decision of 10 January 2011. The figures presented at that moment were: 5 315 bird sites, including 700 marine sites, and 23 268 habitat sites, including 1 429 marine sites. As it turned out, this data has been corrected by the European Commission and according to the Natura 2000 Barometer from June 2011 the state of the network in the EU in January 2011 was as follows: 5 347 bird sites, including 566 marine sites, and 22 594 habitat sites, including 1 247 marine sites. The total number of Natura 2000 sites according to the abovementioned Barometer in January 2011 was 25 106<sup>6</sup>. Natura 2000 areas covered 17,5% of the land surface of the European Union (751 150 km<sup>2</sup> on land), and 198 760 km<sup>2</sup> of the seas surrounding the EU member countries.

The important thing is that the Natura 2000 Barometer from June 2011 presenting the state of the network in January 2011 for the first time did not include the European Commission assessment with regard to the completeness of the network designation in different member countries. It can be therefore assumed that the Commission decided that the state of the network in January 2011 reflects the complete designation of Natura 2000 sites in the EU, so the basic shape of the network is not going to change significantly.

In order to sum up the monitoring of the development of the Natura 2000 network, the chart below presents the changes that took place in Poland and in the European Union, concerning the amount of Natura 2000 sites, that have been presented in the three reports<sup>7</sup> on the changes in the creation of the Natura 2000 network prepared in the institute of Sustainable Development. It clearly

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<sup>6</sup> Similarly to Poland, the number of added bird and habitat sites in the EU does not equal the total number of Natura 2000 sites because many of them overlap.

<sup>7</sup> Taking into account the changes in the amount of sites presented in the Natura 2000 Barometer from August 2011.

shows that when Poland was joining the European Union, the major part of the Natura 2000 network in the so called “old” member countries was already created, although the EC assessments concerning the completeness of the proposals of each country (concerning the number of sites and the relevant documentation) were still very critical.

**Compilation of changes concerning the officially approved Natura 2000 sites in Poland and the European Union.**

	<b>Number of bird sites</b>	<b>Number of habitat sites</b>
<b>Poland</b>		
May 2004	72	184
September 2007	124	364
March 2009	141	364
March 2011	144	823
March 2012	144	823
<b>European Union</b>		
October 2003	3 200	15 557
June 2005	4 002	20 587
June 2007	4 830	21 474
March 2009	5 147	21 633
March 2011	5 347	22 594
March 2012	5 347 (?)	22 760

**II. Key events and decisions related to the creation of the Natura 2000 network in Poland and the EU during the last year (from III 2011 to III 2012) and the state of the Natura 2000 network at the beginning of 2012.**

An important event related to the Natura 2000 network in the European Union was the EC announcement of 3 May 2011 of the new strategy of biodiversity protection which sets the directions for development for the next 10 years i.e. until 2020 and further on until 2050. The European Union Environmental Council approved the Strategy in June 2011 unchanged. Aims 1 (full implementation of the bird and habitat directives) and 3 (assuring sustainable development of agriculture and forestry) of the new strategy are directly related to the issue of Natura 2000 and above all to providing effective management for over 26 thousand Natura 2000 sites, that are supposed to bring benefits both for nature and for people who live there and those who are

supposed to integrate the biodiversity protection policy with other main EU sector policies. However, it will only be possible if sufficient funds for this aim are provided. This is why in the discussion about the new multiannual financial framework of the EU which would define the priorities among the EU spending after 2013, this Strategy needs to be really taken into account.

The EU council, as part of its conclusions of 19 December 2011 at the end of the Polish Presidency (18862/11) again mentioned the new EU Strategy of biodiversity protection by 2020. The conclusions summarised the works led by Poland during its Presidency in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2011. The conclusions referred to the implementation of the Strategy and focused on particular measures necessary for the completion of its main goals. The conclusions also referred to the ongoing negotiations concerning the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 and to the EU policy reforms under consultation, very important from the perspective of reaching the basic EU biodiversity goal by 2020, i.e. common agriculture policy, common fishery policy and cohesion policy. Without prejudging the results of those negotiations, the majority of the member countries underlined the need to include biodiversity in all sector policies, as this is the only way to reverse the current tendency of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation. Unfortunately the conclusions included the claim that the EU is currently not able to achieve its main goal for 2020. This summary of the Polish presidency is even more disappointing when you take into account that biodiversity protection was supposed to be one of its four priorities.

#### Habitat sites in Poland:

What may be important for the shape of the Natura 2000 network in the long run is the fact that in June 2011 the General Director of Environmental Protection launched public consultations concerning the projected Natura 2000 sites of Community importance, that were proposed in accordance with the decisions of the biogeographical seminar organised by the EC in March 2010. The assessment of the Natura 2000 network completeness in Poland, carried out by the European Commission, pointed out to the need to create new or extend the already existing sites for over a dozen species of plants, animals and habitats.

In order to fulfil those obligations, the General Directorate for Environmental Protection carried out necessary analysis and presented for consultations 19 new habitat sites and changes in 37 already approved sites. The proposals partly overlapped with the Shadow List 2010. Many of those sites had already been consulted in 2009 and 2010 but no decisions were taken. In relation to 9 sites significant extension was suggested and in the remaining cases only small corrections in the borders, including detailed specification of the borders or changing the demarcation between adjacent sites.

During the biogeographical seminar in March 2010 the deadline for Poland to present the European Commission with the supplement habitat sites was set on 1 October 2011. (1 October of a given year is a day until which the European Commission accepts changes in the member countries' databases concerning Natura 2000 sites, on the basis of which the Commission prepares decisions to be published in the last quarter of the following year. Until now (early March 2012) nothing has been said about the results of those consultations. It is not known whether Poland has completed the obligation and applied to the European Commission for the approval of the list of new sites and suggested changes in relation to a number of already approved sites. According to unofficial information, due to the need for extra research and analysis Poland has negotiated to postpone the deadline of the presentation of proposed new habitat sites by one year – until 1 October 2012.

The comparison between the proposal of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection from June 2011 with the proposals from independent naturalists in the Shadow List 2010 shows that the proposal does not meet all the requirements from the already mentioned biogeographical seminar. There are still a dozen or so sites that should be suggested as future Natura 2000 sites, while some already existing sites require enlargement. Still, the postponement of the abovementioned deadline gives Poland the opportunity to prepare a completed proposal of the Natura 2000 extension in Poland, which would be fully compatible with the requirements included in the habitat directive.

An important event for the Natura 2000 network in Poland with regard to habitat areas in the period under analysis was the Decision taken by the European Commission on 17 November 2011 concerning the designation of new areas of community importance. As a result of this decision no new areas have been designated in Poland. By presenting amendments to its previous decisions, the Commission only corrected some data concerning chosen Natura 2000 sites already designated in Poland. The Commission's decision concerned the proposal presented by the Polish government sent to Brussels in 2010. In the Polish part of the Natura 2000 network we have noted that the decision brought the following changes: three sites have been significantly reduced, one site has been significantly extended, in eight areas small surface corrections have been made, and one site has changed the name and the category (from PLC to PLH) which means that in this case bird and habitat areas do not cover exactly the same surface.

Therefore, the decision has not influenced the number of habitat sites in Poland; there are still 823 approved sites of this type – 778 from the Continental Biogeographical Region and 45 from the Alpine Biogeographical Region. Seven of those sites have double status, they are both bird and habitat sites at the same time.

### Bird areas in Poland

As regards bird areas, no significant changes have been introduced in the period under analysis. The last official decision was the Ordinance of the Minister of Environment of 12 January 2011 on Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds, by means of which three new SPAs have been designated, one existing SPA has been enlarged and some changes introduced in the surface of a number of areas – this information was presented in the previous report.

As a result of the implementation of the abovementioned Ordinance there are now 144 officially approved bird sites in Poland. Three of them are marine sites. Seven bird sites have double status and they are habitat sites at the same time.

On 1 March 2012 the General Directorate for Environmental Protection launched consultations of the proposal to designate one new Special Protection Area for birds – the proposed area of Studwia and Przysowa Valley is located on Kutnowska Plain. Possible designation of this area will not finish the process of designating bird sites in Poland.

As it was said in the previous report, the Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP), the organisation which designates areas in Poland that important for birds (as a partner of the global federation BirdLife International), in early December 2010 sent an official letter to the General Directorate for Environmental Protection pointing to the need for extending the list of Natura 2000 SPAs in Poland. This position was based on the latest publication on important bird areas (IBA) in Poland, where OTOP points to 174 areas that fulfil international criteria of IBA designation. Out of 34 new areas included in the list (in comparison to a similar inventory from 2004) 29 still need to be officially approved with a disposition and included in the Natura 2000 network (as of early March 2012). Among those 29 areas, one more marine site has been proposed – Eastern Boundary Waters – covering some of the eastern part of Gdansk Bay adjacent to Mierzeja Wiślana.

### Changes in the Natura 2000 network in the whole EU:

During the past year, changes in the Natura 2000 network took place not only in Poland but also in many other EU countries. The lists of Natura 2000 sites were extended.

During the period under analysis, the list of habitat sites was extended once. On 21 November 2011 the European Commission announced its decision to designate 166 new Natura 2000 sites, with a total surface of almost 18 800 km<sup>2</sup>. Over 90% of the areas added to the



network at that time were marine sites (17 000 km<sup>2</sup>) mainly in Great Britain but also in France, Belgium, Greece, Cyprus and Italy. Many new sites were also added in Hungary and in Lithuania. On the other hand, in many other Member States (Austria, Germany, Spain, Ireland, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden) the update mostly concerned modifications, such as adaptations to site areas or deletions/additions of smaller sites. This latest update of the network (the previous one took place in January 2011) concerned 15 Member States and six of the EU's terrestrial biogeographical regions - the Alpine, Atlantic, Boreal, Continental, Mediterranean and Pannonian regions and many marine regions.

As a result, the extent of habitat sites in the European Union has increased by 2,6% (to 585 688 km<sup>2</sup> terrestrial area and 166 732 km<sup>2</sup> marine area), while the number of sites reached 22 760.

The Commission announced that the decision of 21 November 2011 is an important step towards the completion of the Natura 2000 network in the UE, which was planned for the end of 2012 but due to delays in Poland and some other countries it will be postponed by at least one year. That would mean the fulfilment of one of the key obligations assumed by the Community as part of the EU biodiversity strategy, an obligation confirmed in the new version of the strategy adopted in June 2011.

The European Commission published the last available data concerning the number and the total area of bird sites in the European Union in January 2012 in the Natura 2000 barometer and they concern the update made in August 2011. However, in that update the Commission did not take into account all the changes that had been made since the previous Barometer (which are usually announced twice a year), for example with regard to Poland, there was no mention of changes made in February 2011, when by force of the Ordinance of the Minister of Environment a number of new sites was designated in Poland. According to the data from the last Barometer neither the number of bird sites nor their surface has changed since January 2011. There are 5 347 sites, including 566 marine ones. They cover 517 340 km<sup>2</sup> terrestrial surface and 110 220 km<sup>2</sup> marine surface. The data concerning bird areas reflecting the state of their designation by member States at the end of 2011/beginning of 2012 will probably be available no sooner than in June 2012, when the Commission publishes the next Natura 2000 Barometer.

At the moment, the whole Natura 2000 network covers almost 18% of the terrestrial territory of the EU (i.e. almost 753 000 km<sup>2</sup>) and over 215 000 km<sup>2</sup> of marine surface surrounding Member States. Altogether, there are over 26 000 Natura 2000 areas.

Although the Commission declares that the Natura 2000 will be completed soon, one should bear in mind that this completion will only relate to the general shape of the network. It does not

mean though that there will be no changes in the future concerning its content and surface – in cases justified by objective criteria (above all new scientific data about the existence or extinction of particular natural values) new sites may be included in the network from time to time, and data corrections will be made, just as it happened in November 2011 with regard to some Natura 2000 sites in Poland.

### **III. Expected future events related to the creation of the Natura 2000 network in Poland and in the European Union**

As it has been shown in the previous chapter, the process of the Natura 2000 network creation in Poland has not been finished yet, although the general framework is ready.

Habitat areas agreed upon during the special (additional)<sup>8</sup> biogeographical seminar for Poland and the biogeographical Baltic seminar (both were held in 2010), out of which some were consulted in 2010 and 2011, after verification should be sent to the European Commission. As the deadline for Poland has been postponed, this application can be expected before 1 October 2012. Decisions concerning the approval of SCIs are usually announced by the Commission a year after the application, therefore the next decision can be expected no sooner than at the end of 2013/the beginning of 2014. The list of new habitat sites presented for consultation in June last year does not meet all the EC requirements from biogeographical seminars, therefore the national Directorate for Environmental protection will have to prepare further proposals and presenting them for public consultation.

As regards bird areas it can be expected that the new IBAs presented by OTOP will be verified by government experts and this or next year all or most of them will be officially approved. Otherwise, Poland will risk reprimand from the European Commission, which being aware of the new inventory of IBAs prepared by the partner organisation of an international federation of bird lovers ((BirdLife International) will surely demand its presentation.

It should be also remembered that the changes in the surface of the Natura 2000 network will take place independently from the main process of network creation. Due to the implementation of various investments, in Poland and in other Member States, sometimes it may be necessary to abandon the protection of already designated areas. Natural compensation in this case may include

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<sup>8</sup> Biogeographical seminars about habitat sites were usually organised by the EC not for individual countries but for groups of countries to discuss their proposals regarding Natura 2000 sites in one of the 9 biogeographical regions. As Polish proposals met with severe criticism, it was decided to organise an extra seminar only for Poland, when it presents another list of proposed habitat sites.

for example protecting the same species or natural habitats in other places by designating new Natura 2000 sites. This is an opportunity to use some of the earlier proposals, which have not yet been officially approved and included in the network.

The process of preparing information about Natura 2000 sites to be presented to the European Commission will be definitely influenced by the EC decision of 11 July 2011 introducing a new format of the Standard Data Form (SDF) for Natura 2000 sites, which is to be used to present information about the sites. By the end of September 2012 EU Member States are supposed to complete and transfer the information of Natura 2000 sites in their territories (in the new SDF more information is required) to the new format, and all new sites and updates concerning the already designated ones have to be presented in the new format.

Obviously, the changes in the Natura 2000 network will still be happening in the following few years.

Therefore it will still be necessary to monitor the process and to continuously update the information about Natura 2000 sites presented on the ISD's web portal "Natura 2000 and tourism".

#### **IV. Natura 2000 in Poland – various initiatives and projects**

When at the beginning of 2011 the European Commission decided that the Natura 2000 network in the EU is near completion, the attention turned more towards the management of the Natura 2000 network. It can be clearly seen in the messages from the Commission to Member States (published for example in Natura 2000 Newsletter or in publications), as well as in the activities of the institutions managing the network in every Member State – including Poland – and in the activities of NGOs.

The most important thing for the correct functioning of the Natura 2000 network is the preparation of plans that would constitute the base for the monitoring of habitats and species for the protection of which the sites were designated, as well as for conservation and management activities. In Poland, we have two kinds of such plans: plans of conservation tasks (which have to be prepared for all Natura 2000 sites during 6 years after their designation) and conservation plans (which will be prepared for chosen Natura 2000 sites or for some particular parts of those sites).

As it has already been said in the previous report, the implementation of a big project "Preparation of plans of conservation tasks for Natura 2000 sites in Poland" prepared by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection (GDOŚ), started at the beginning of December 2009. Its

goal was to prepare by the end of 2013 the documentation necessary for the plans of conservation tasks for 406 Natura 2000 sites across Poland (financed by the European Regional Development Fund via The Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment). According to the latest information from GDOŚ, not all those plans will be ready by the end of 2013, and now it is said that at least 370 plans should be ready in time.

The project, implemented in cooperation with all 16 Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection (RDOŚ) and with seven national parks is a very difficult one. The plans are prepared in under a very socialised procedure – in relation to most of the plans there are information and consultation workshops organised (usually 3 of them but in case of very big sites there are more meetings). Apart from the teams that prepare the plans and the representatives of local RDOŚ, the participants include the representatives of local authorities, enterprises operating in the Natura 2000 site, NGOs and interested local citizens.

The plans of conservation tasks are prepared not only under the abovementioned project. Some of them are designed through individual initiatives of RDOŚ and financed from their own budget.

Many of those plans are fairly advanced, some are about to be ordered or are waiting for the contract-tendering process to be launched. However so far (until March 2012) there have been no further information from GDOS and RDOŚ concerning the approval of those plans – so the only approved plan of conservation tasks is the plan for the habitat site Murawy w Haćkach<sup>9</sup> in Podlaskie voivodeship. Information concerning the ongoing works in this field, including consultation meetings, is available on the websites of regional directorates for environmental protection.

Another legal obligation of the institutions responsible for Natura 2000 sites is providing them with official Natura 2000 signboards. In many voivodeships, regional directorates for environmental protection have already started to work on this and many sites are equipped with such signboards, which can be encountered on site. Those are red signboards with the national emblem, the name of the site, and its code, indicating the type of the site and its consecutive number in the voivodeship. They are set up in collaboration with forest inspectorates, roads administration, local authorities and other institutions.

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<sup>9</sup> Disposition No 36/10 of the Regional Director for Environmental Protection in Białystok from 20 December 2010 on the development of a plan of conservation tasks for the Natura 2000 site Murawy w Haćkach (PLH200015).

Depending on the size of a site, between a few and a few dozen signboards are set up. For example, in the Masovian voivodeship there are already 6 sign boards on the site Wydmy Lucynowsko-Mostowieckie (information from November 2011) and on another 6 Natura 2000 sites 117 sign boards are planned to be set up - Dolina Wkry i Mławki (15), Ostoja Nadliwiecka (49), Aleja Pachnicowa (2), Pakoślaw (5), Dolina Zwolenki (10), Puszcza Biała (36). Taking into account that there are 74 Natura 2000 sites in the Masovian voivodeship (14 special protection areas for birds and 59 sites of community importance – habitat sites) and Kampinoski National Park which is both a bird site and a habitat site, one can imagine that those works are not only costly but also time consuming in this region and in the whole country.

In addition to official sign boards in some sites there are also education and information boards are being set up, presenting information about the species and habitats protected in the area, similar to those installed along educational paths. For example in Lubelskie voivodeship



setting up such boards was one of the tasks carried out in 2011 as part of the works concerning tourism management in Natura 2000 sites under the project “Protecting xerothermic grasslands in Poland – theory and practice”, financed from LIFE+ financial instrument of the European Commission and the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management.

In order to promote the knowledge about the Natura 2000 network in different circles, the General Directorate for Environmental Protection launched a number of big information and education projects (relevant information can be found on the website: [http://www.gdos.gov.pl/ProjectCategories/viewNews/2/Projekty\\_krajowe](http://www.gdos.gov.pl/ProjectCategories/viewNews/2/Projekty_krajowe)). The projects are financed from the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment, so from the EU Cohesion Policy resources. At the moment the following projects are being carried out:

- “Natura 2000 network – a road to development” – project addressed to the representatives of local governments in communes and counties as well as to the regional directorates for environmental protection. Its aim is to provide knowledge, mainly by means of e-learning, presentation of good practices, various educational materials, and the participation of the representatives of the General Directorate in regional congresses (in may 2010 and 2011) where they led educational workshops or panel discussions; the project also includes the update of the social communication strategy in Nature 2000 sites.

- “Nature and Economy, a basis for dialogue” – project addressed to business (micro, small and medium enterprises) and institutions and organisations related to business. It includes, among other things, social awareness survey among businessmen, concerning sustainable development, Natura 2000 network and the level of knowledge and services provided by the business environment institutions, trainings and workshops and creation of local Natura 2000 Partnerships.
- “Keep your balance, discover Nature” – the aim of the project is to raise ecological awareness and promote knowledge especially about Natura 2000, mainly among students; it also includes e-learning courses, 30 summer camps for students (many of them were organised in summer 2011) and a number of big media campaigns.

An important event organised by GDOŚ and also related to the Natura 2000 network was the launch of the Geo-service of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection (<http://geoserwis.gdos.gov.pl>), where it is possible to search, browse, download and modify spatial data of protected areas such as national and landscape parks, nature reserves, Natura 2000 sites and protected landscape areas. “Geodeta” magazine awarded the General Directorate with the *plus* award in the competition Pluses and Minuses 2011 for creating a system of spatial information based on free software, fulfilling the requirements of the INSPIRE Directive.

Spatial data concerning Natura 2000 sites (their boundaries projected over land registers, topographic maps and orthophotos) are still available on Geoportal, which was described in the previous report.

GDOŚ is not the only institution carrying out important projects supporting the implementation and management of the Natura 2000 network. Non-governmental organisations also act in this field, contributing significantly to the promotion of knowledge about Natura 2000 and increasing social understanding of the need to protect their natural values. I am going to present a few examples.

During two years (2010-2011) Towarzystwo na rzecz Ziemi (The Society for Earth) led a big campaign promoting the Natura 2000 network “Natura się o(d)placa” (“Nature pays (off)”). The project was mainly educational and informational in character. It was addressed to local authorities and communities of 12 chosen communes (Bukowina Tatrzańska, Mszana Dolna, Aleksandrów Kujawski, Szczawnica, Kraków, Narewka, Dębowa Kłoda, Płaska, Iłów, Ciężkowice, Ińsko and Łądek Zdrój). Together with the communes, the Society undertook actions to use the potential of Natura 2000 for promotion and local development. The project included the production of a series of films (presented online on YouTube), educational materials (folders) and interactive maps. It was financed

by the European Regional Development Fund and the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management.

The Naturalists' Club organised a cycle of workshops "How to care for a Natura 2000 site and for waters – in planning processes and in everyday life" – workshops for naturalists involved in nature conservation including the elaboration of conservation plans, were held in April and December 2011 in Ciężęń upon Warta and in February 2012 in Cracow. The project was co-financed by the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management.

From October 2010 till the end of 2011, "Green Action" Ecological Foundation (Fundacja Ekologiczna „Zielona Akcja”) in collaboration with the Foundation for Sustainable Development (Fundacja EkoRozwoju, FER) carried out a project "Nature Leaders – a national campaign promoting good practices of Natura 2000 sites protection". The project was aimed mainly at the leaders of Local Action Groups, Partner Groups, representatives of local authorities and NGOs, and it was focused on organising intensive trainings for those leaders.

Since November 2010, the Institute for Sustainable Development has been carrying out its fourth project linked to the web portal "Natura 2000 and tourism" – "The open waters of Natura 2000". The project involved the enrichment of the educational resources on the portal, the update of the already collected materials, and in addition to that, organisation of another cycle of trainings for the tourism sector, as well as conducting two series of sociological research concerning the ecological awareness among teenagers from middle schools and tourists visiting regions of high natural value with Natura 2000 sites. Also, like in previous projects, the institute organised a competition for teenagers "Natura 2000 site – our regional treasure" which is already very popular among students and their teachers. The project has been financed by the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management.

Many NGOs support the implementation and proper management of the Natura 2000 network via projects involving active conservation or revalorisation of natural resources of Natura 2000 sites or chosen priority habitats and species. In the period 2010-2011 most of these projects were financed from the Life + financial instrument of the European Commission. The organisations include: The Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP), The Naturalists' Club, Birds of Poland, Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (PTOP), Western-Pomeranian Naturalist Society, Wetland Protection Centre, Eagle Protection Committee and the Polish Office of the Regional Ecological Centre for Central and Eastern Europe.

## **V. Institutions responsible for Natura 2000 sites in Poland**

The basic shape of the organisational structure related to the management of the Natura 2000 network in our country was established in late 2008 and since then it has not been changed.

Institutions responsible for the designation of Natura 2000 sites and the functioning of the Natura 2000 network in Poland include in the first place the minister in charge of the environment and the General Director for Environmental Protection (GDOŚ), directing the General Directorate for Environmental Protection (since 2008 the most important institution concerning the Natura 2000 network). The latter, just like regional directors for environmental protection (RDOŚ) directing regional directorates for environmental protection in every one of 16 voivodeships, are official administration organs designated mainly for the actions concerning the creation and conservation of Natura 2000 sites, and have been in operation since 15 November 2008. Most of Natura 2000 sites are directly supervised by regional directors for environmental protection. As regards marine sites the supervision belongs to directors of the seafarer's offices, while national parks are supervised by their respective directors.

Regional deputy directors for environmental protection also serve as regional nature conservators and they are responsible for the main issues related to the Natura 2000 network in each voivodeship.

The future state of habitats and species protected under Natura 2000 also depends on the functioning of the institutions which manage natural resources such as water (regional water management authorities, regional management authorities of drainage, irrigation and water infrastructure) and forests (regional directorates of state forests). The opportunity to protect the natural values of Natura 2000 sites depends on the way the above-mentioned institutions include the conditionings related to the need to protect those values in the plans concerning the management of natural resources (e.g. river basin management plans, forest management plans).

## **VI. Materials used for the preparation of this report**

The preparation of this report was based on the monitoring of events related to the creation and functioning of the Natura 2000 network carried out continuously for a number of years in the Institute for Sustainable Development. Various kinds of information have been used. Above all, the information and data made available by the representatives of the Ministry of Environment and the General Directorate for Environmental Protection, from their presentations at conferences, interviews in the press and from personal contacts, as well as the information from the analysis of documents, communications and official reports of those institutions and the information from non-governmental organisations.



## VII. List of useful sources of information about Natura 2000

Generally available printed literature about the Natura 2000 network is still scarce and their print run is usually low. Luckily, electronic versions of some of those publications are also available on the Internet. Below, there are the most important positions related directly to Natura 2000 and publications which somehow relate to that topic or are helpful to understand the problems with the Natura 2000 network. More information can be found on the Internet. Therefore the list below also includes addresses of internet portals and websites containing information about Natura 2000, managed by more important national and foreign institutions and non-governmental organisations.

### **Publications in print (in Polish):**

Dubel A., Jamontt-Skotis M., Królikowska K., Stefańska J., Banrowska A. *Skuteczne zarządzanie Obszarami Natura 2000*. Centre for Systems Solutions, Cracow 2010

Cieśliński S., Czyżewska K., Fabiszewski J., *Czerwona lista porostów wymarłych i zagrożonych w Polsce*. Monografie Botaniczne nr 91, 2003.

*Ekologia i ochrona środowiska. Wybrane zagadnienia*. Ed. Wnuk Z., Rzeszów University Press, Rzeszów 2010 (2nd edition)

*Europejska sieć ekologiczna Natura 2000 i obszary chronionego krajobrazu – zasady funkcjonowania wielkopowierzchniowych obszarów chronionych. Publikacja pokonferencyjna*. Association of Suwalski Landscape Park „Kraina Hańczy”, Suwalski Landscape Park and Suwałki County Office, Suwałki-Turtul 2010.

*Europejska Sieć Ekologiczna Natura 2000 jako nowy element otoczenia polskiej wsi i rolnictwa*. Bołtomiuk A. (ed.), Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw 2010.

Iddle E., I Bines T., *Planowanie ochrony obszarów cennych przyrodniczo. Przewodnik dla praktyków i ich szefów*. Naturalists' Club, Świebodzin 2004.

*Jak projektować i prowadzić działania informacyjno-konsultacyjne na obszarach Natura 2000?* Grodzińska-Jurczak M. i Tarabuła-Fiertak M. (red.), Jagiellonian University Press, Cracow 2010.

Jachnik A., Kupczyk P., Górka M., Pchałek M., *Interwencje ekologiczne w obronie ostoi Natura 2000. Praktyczny poradnik*. Polish Society for the Protection of Birds, Marki 2010.

- Kalinowska A., Artykuł 13. *W poszukiwaniu społecznego wsparcia w zarządzaniu Konwencją o różnorodności biologicznej. Polska praktyka na tle doświadczeń światowych*. Wydawnicza Arkadiusz Grzegorzczak Publicity and Press Agency, Warsaw 2008.
- Kamieniecka J., Wójcik B. *Natura 2000 – ABC dla turystyki*. Institute for Sustainable Development, Warsaw 2010: <http://natura2000.org.pl/publikacje>
- Kamieniecka J., Wójcik B. i Sienkiewicz B. *Natura 2000 w edukacji szkolnej. Poradnik dla nauczycieli*. Institute for Sustainable Development, Warsaw 2007.
- Kistowski M., Pchałek M., *Natura 2000 w planowaniu przestrzennym – rola korytarzy ekologicznych*. Ministry of Environment and the General Directorate for Environmental Protection, Warsaw 2009.
- Kmieciak M., *Funkcjonowanie prawa do informacji. Raport z monitoringu urzędów gmin leżących na obszarach Natura 2000 pod kątem prowadzenia w formie elektronicznej publicznego wykazu danych w dokumentach zawierających informacje o środowisku*. Fundacja Wspierania Inicjatyw Ekologicznych, Cracow 2008.
- Kmieciak M., *Raport na temat funkcjonowania ustawy o zapobieganiu szkodom w środowisku i ich naprawie*. Fundacja Wspierania Inicjatyw Ekologicznych, Cracow 2008.
- Koncepcja krajowej sieci ekologicznej ECONET-POLSKA*. Liro A. (ed.), IUCN Poland, Warsaw 1995.
- Krajowa strategia ochrony i umiarkowanego użytkowania różnorodności biologicznej wraz z Programem działań*. Ministry of Environment, Warsaw 2003:  
[http://www.wwf.pl/informacje/publikacje/natura/strategia\\_roznorodnosc\\_biologiczna.pdf](http://www.wwf.pl/informacje/publikacje/natura/strategia_roznorodnosc_biologiczna.pdf)
- Młodzież a Natura 2000*. Institute for Sustainable Development, Warsaw 2011:  
<http://natura2000.org.pl/publikacje>
- Monitoring gatunków roślin. Przewodnik metodyczny*. Part 1. Environmental Monitoring Library. General Inspectorate for Environmental Protection, Warsaw 2010.
- Monitoring gatunków zwierząt. Przewodnik metodyczny*. Part 1. Environmental Monitoring Library. General Inspectorate for Environmental Protection, Warsaw 2010
- Monitoring ptaków lęgowych. Poradnik metodyczny dotyczący gatunków chronionych Dyrektywy ptasiej*. Environmental Monitoring Library. General Inspectorate for Environmental Protection, Warsaw 2009.
- Monitoring ptaków wodno-błotnych w okresie wędrówek. Poradnik metodyczny*. General Directorate for Environmental Protection, Warsaw 2011.

- Monitoring siedlisk przyrodniczych. Przewodnik metodyczny. Part 1. Environmental Monitoring Library. General Inspectorate for Environmental Protection, Warsaw 2010*
- Ochrona dziko żyjących zwierząt przy inwestycjach drogowych w Polsce. Kurek R.T. (ed.), Stowarzyszenie Pracownia na rzecz Wszystkich Istot, Bystra 2007.*
- Ochrona Środowiska 2011. Statistical information. Central Statistical Office, Warsaw 2011.*
- Ostoje ptaków o znaczeniu międzynarodowym w Polsce. Wilk Ł., Jujka M., Krogulec J., Chylarecki P. (eds), Polish Society for the Protection of Birds, Warsaw 2010.*
- Ostoje roślinne w Polsce. Mirek Z., Nickel A., Paul W., Wilk Ł. (eds), W. Szafer Institute of Botanics, Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow 2005.*
- Petit-Uzac V. (adapted to the Polish conditions by Pawlaczyk P.). *Planowanie ochrony obszarów Natura 2000 – przewodnik metodyczny. Ministry of Environment, Warsaw 2004.*
- Polska Czerwona Księga Roślin. Kaźmierczakowa R., Zarzycki K. (eds), W. Szafer Institute of Botanics, Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow 2001.*
- Polska Czerwona Księga Zwierząt. Bezkręgowce. Głowaciński Z., Nowacki J. (eds), Institute of Nature Conservation of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow 2004.*
- Polska Czerwona Księga Zwierząt. Kręgowce. Głowaciński Z. (ed.), Institute of Nature Conservation of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow 2001.*
- Różnorodność biologiczna Polski. Drugi polski raport – 10 lat po Rio. Andrzejewski R., Weigle A. (eds), National Foundation for Environmental Protection, Warsaw 2003.*
- Strażnicy Natury 2000. Zapobieganie szkodom w praktyce. FER Foundation, Wrocław 2010.*
- Symonides E., *Ochrona Przyrody. Warsaw University Press, Warsaw 2007 (2nd edition 2008).*
- Tworzenie lokalnych form ochrony przyrody. Materiały konferencyjne, Fundacja Wspierania Inicjatyw Ekologicznych, Cracow 2002.*
- Unia Europejska dla zachowania różnorodności biologicznej polskich lasów. Studia i materiały CEPL, R. 12, z. 2 (25), Rogów 2010.*
- Uwarunkowania zrównoważonego rozwoju gmin objętych siecią Natura 2000 w świetle badań empirycznych. Bołtomiuk A. (ed.), Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw 2011.*

### **Electronic publications (in Polish):**

*Biuletyn Komitetu Ochrony Przyrody PAN vol. 1/2010 Natura 2000:*

[http://www.botany.pl/kop-pan/kop\\_biul.html](http://www.botany.pl/kop-pan/kop_biul.html)

Dubel A., Jamontt-Skotis M., Królikowska K., Stefańska J., Banrowska A. *Skuteczne zarządzanie Obszarami Natura 2000*. Centre for Systems Solutions, Cracow 2010:

<http://www.natura2000.crs.org.pl/index.php?s=6>

*Natura 2000 a aktywność człowieka – 7 intersectoral manuals (Natura 2000*

*i społeczeństwo, Natura 2000 a gospodarka wodna, Natura 2000 i akwakultura, Natura 2000 w leśnictwie, Korzyści dla rolnictwa wynikające z gospodarowania na obszarach Natura 2000, Natura 2000 w ocenach oddziaływania przedsięwzięć na środowisko, Natura 2000 w planowaniu przestrzennym - rola korytarzy ekologicznych)*. Ministry of Environment, Warsaw 2009:

[http://www.gdos.gov.pl/Articles/view/1911/Natura\\_2000\\_a\\_aktywnosc\\_czlowieka](http://www.gdos.gov.pl/Articles/view/1911/Natura_2000_a_aktywnosc_czlowieka)

*Natura 2000 – Niezbędnik leśnika*. Naturalists' Club, Świebodzin 2008:

[http://www.kp.org.pl/oon2000/obiekty/niezbednik\\_lesnika.pdf](http://www.kp.org.pl/oon2000/obiekty/niezbednik_lesnika.pdf).

*Natura 2000 – Niezbędnik urzędnika*. Naturalists' Club, Świebodzin 2008

[http://www.kp.org.pl/oon2000/obiekty/niezbednik\\_urzednika.pdf](http://www.kp.org.pl/oon2000/obiekty/niezbednik_urzednika.pdf)

Mrocza M., Nowicka-Kudłacz K., Okrański K., Ślusarczyk R., *Paragrafy dla przyrody. Poradnik strażników miejsc przyrodniczo cennych*. Stowarzyszenie Pracownia Wszystkich Istot, Bystra 2012:

<http://pracownia.org.pl/paragrafy-dla-przyrody-poradnik-straznikow>

*Opracowanie planu zadań ochronnych dla obszaru Natura 2000 – Projekt*. General Directorate for Environmental Protection (last access 01.01.2010):

[http://www.kp.org.pl/pdf/poradniki/wytyczne\\_pzo\\_projekt\\_z\\_20100205\\_ver\\_wg\\_siwz\\_rdos\\_bialystok.pdf](http://www.kp.org.pl/pdf/poradniki/wytyczne_pzo_projekt_z_20100205_ver_wg_siwz_rdos_bialystok.pdf)

Pawlaczyk P., *Jak się troszczyć o obszar Natura 2000 w procesie sporządzania planu zadań ochronnych. Wskazówki dla przyrodników*. Naturalists' Club, November 2010:

[http://www.kp.org.pl/pdf/poradniki/jak\\_sie\\_troszczyc\\_o\\_obszar\\_n2000-pzo20100626.pdf](http://www.kp.org.pl/pdf/poradniki/jak_sie_troszczyc_o_obszar_n2000-pzo20100626.pdf)

*Poradniki ochrony siedlisk i gatunków Natura 2000 – podręcznik metodyczny*. 9 volumes (*Siedliska morskie i przybrzeżne, nadmorskie i śródlądowe solniska i wydmy; Wody słodkie i torfowiska; Murawy, łąki, ziołorośla, wrzosowiska, zarośla; Ściany, piargi, rumowiska skalne i jaskinie; Lasy i bory; Gatunki zwierząt z wyjątkiem ptaków; Ptaki część 1; Ptaki część 2; Gatunki roślin*). Ministry of Environment, Warsaw 2004: <http://natura2000.gdos.gov.pl/natura2000/pl/poradnik.php>

*Poradnik utrzymania i ochrony siedlisk oraz gatunków*. Manuals prepared for the Ministry of Environment, 2004: <http://natura2000.gdos.gov.pl/natura2000/pl/poradnik.php>

*Przewodniki metodyczne dla wybranych siedlisk przyrodniczych i gatunków* [Environmental monitoring library]: <http://www.gios.gov.pl/siedliska/default.asp?nazwa=przewodniki&je=pl>

Stanaszek A., Tędziągolska M., *Świadomość ekologiczna turystów. Raport z badania*. Institute for Sustainable Development, Warsaw 2011: [http://natura2000.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Raport\\_Swiadomosc\\_ekologiczna\\_turystow\\_fin.pdf](http://natura2000.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Raport_Swiadomosc_ekologiczna_turystow_fin.pdf)

*Where there is a will there is a way. Snapshot report of Natura 2000 management. Biodiversity and Nature*. European Environmental Bureau (EEB). Brussels 2011: <http://www.eeb.org/EEB/?LinkServID=5CC039F5-5056-B741-DBFACCB777CA4E16&showMeta=0>

*Guidelines for the establishment of the Natura 2000 network in the marine environment. Application of the Habitats and Birds Directives*. European Commission, May 2007: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/marine>

#### **Important internet portals and sites related to the Natura 2000 network:**

Websites and portals listed below are managed by Polish and foreign state institutions and non-governmental organisations.

#### **The most important Polish websites and portals on Natura 2000:**

The official Polish website of the European Ecological Network Natura 2000 (General Directorate for Environmental Protection): <http://natura2000.gdos.gov.pl/natura2000/>

The website contains the data concerning the officially approved Natura 2000 sites.

Geoportal:

<http://geoportal.gov.pl/>

Official website containing maps of Natura 2000 sites.

Geoservice of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection:

<http://geoserwis.gdos.gov.pl/mapy/>

The website presents spatial data (maps) concerning protected areas, including Natura 2000 sites.

General Directorate for Environmental Protection:

[http://www.gdos.gov.pl/Categories/view/202/Natura\\_2000](http://www.gdos.gov.pl/Categories/view/202/Natura_2000)

GDOŚ information website about Natura 2000.

Projects of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection:

<http://www.gdos.gov.pl/projekty/>

General Directorate for Environmental Protection information website about projects related to Natura 2000

Natura 2000. Feel it:

<http://portalwiedzy.onet.pl/natura2000/>

Information website on Onet.wiem – information campaign of one of the projects carried out by General Directorate for Environmental Protection.

„E-Natura2000” e-learning platform:

<http://e-natura2000.pl/>

E-learning platform run by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection which contains on-line trainings for local authorities and students, prepared under the project “Natura 2000 network – a road to development”

Monitoring of species and habitats: <http://www.gios.gov.pl/siedliska/>

A website monitoring the species (except birds) and habitats, managed by the Institute for Nature Conservation of the Polish Academy of Sciences with a focus on special areas of conservation Natura 2000.

Monitoring of birds: <http://monitoringptakow.gios.gov.pl/app/>

A website monitoring the birds managed by ornithological organisations and institutions for the Chief Inspectorate of Environmental Protection as part of the National Environmental Monitoring with a focus on special protection areas for birds Natura 2000.

Institute for Nature Conservation, Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow:

[http://www.iop.krakow.pl/natura2000/pl\\_dokumenty.php](http://www.iop.krakow.pl/natura2000/pl_dokumenty.php)

Documents concerning the creation of the Natura 2000 network. The Institute of Nature Conservation carries out the crucial part of the conceptual and verification works on the project of the Natura 2000 network in Poland.

Naturalists' Club: <http://www.kp.org.pl/n2k/index.html>

Website containing various information materials about the Natura 2000 network as well as materials from the works on the *Shadow List* of Natura 2000 habitat sites in Poland.

Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP): [www.ostojeptakow.pl](http://www.ostojeptakow.pl)

Website about protection sites for birds and their place in the Natura 2000 network. OTOP is a leading organisation when it comes to designing Natura 2000 bird sites in Poland.

Polish Society for Nature Conservation "Salamandra":

[http://www.salamandra.org.pl/index.php?option=com\\_alphacontent&view=alphacontent&Itemid=175](http://www.salamandra.org.pl/index.php?option=com_alphacontent&view=alphacontent&Itemid=175)

Information and news about the Natura 2000 network.

„Natura się o(d)pląca”:

<http://www.nso.info.pl/>

Project run by the Society for the Earth (Towarzystwo na rzecz Ziemi).

Natura 2000 sites in Lower Silesia:

<http://www.natura2000.pl/>

Website run by the FER Foundation from Wrocław, presenting Natura 2000 sites and related to two projects carried out by the Foundation: Nature guards and Nature leaders. The website serves to announce and gather information about breaches of law resulting in the deterioration or destruction of Natura 2000 habitats and species.

Natura 2000 in Odra Valley: <http://natura.odra.pl/>

Website of Odra Atlas containing materials from a Polish-Czech-German project concerning Natura 2000 sites in Odra Valley.

Natura 2000 on Forum Przyroda:

<http://forum.przyroda.org/natura-2000-vf40.htm?sid=42bf0c3b6480ffd698fc4056113ba62f>

Internet discussion forum.

Selection of foreign websites and portals on Natura 2000:

Official website of the Natura 2000 network managed by the European Commission:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/>

The official Natura 2000 website in the EU – legal basis, methodical and information materials.

European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (under EIONET – a partnership network of the European Environment Agency (EEA) and its member and cooperating countries):

[http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura\\_2000/index\\_html](http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura_2000/index_html)

The website of the most important expert institution (apart from EEA) analysing the process of creating the Natura 2000 network.

Natura 2000 Viewer:

<http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/#>

Official 3D public viewer of Natura 2000 sites in the EU, developed by the European Environment Agency (EEA).

Life Programme:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm>

A website about LIFE – the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU, and projects financed by this fund, many of which is related to Natura 2000 sites, habitats or species.

BirdLife International:

[http://www.birdlife.org/eu/EU\\_policy/Birds\\_Habitats\\_Directives/natura2000\\_intro.html](http://www.birdlife.org/eu/EU_policy/Birds_Habitats_Directives/natura2000_intro.html)

Website on Natura 2000 managed by the international organisation which designed the criteria of designing Important Bird Areas accepted as Natura 2000 bird sites.

Official Belgian website of Natura 2000:

[http://www.biodiv.be/implementation/protected\\_areas/natura-2000-belgium](http://www.biodiv.be/implementation/protected_areas/natura-2000-belgium)

Official French website of Natura 2000:

<http://www.natura2000.fr/>

Official Lithuanian website of Natura 2000::

<http://www.am.lt/VI/index.php#a/6802>



Official Czech website of Natura 2000:

<http://www.nature.cz/natura2000-design3/hp.php>

Official German website of Natura 2000:

[http://www.bmu.de/naturschutz\\_biologische\\_vielfalt/natura\\_2000/links/doc/2259.php](http://www.bmu.de/naturschutz_biologische_vielfalt/natura_2000/links/doc/2259.php)

Official Slovak website of Natura 2000::

<http://www.sopsr.sk/natura/>

*Warsaw, March 2012 r.*

