

## Natura 2000 supports sustainable development

The Habitats Directive specifies clearly that the designation of Natura 2000 sites should not prevent economic development. However, development activities should be in the spirit of sustainable development.

The following shows what is true, and what is not true, about Natura 2000 and the livelihoods of local people.

### It is true that...

- Agricultural and forestry activities can be consistent with N2000 requirements, and at the same time viable economically
- In an area of designated high nature value, the number of rural jobs will increase
- Natura 2000 designation is proof of the special nature value of the area, which can generate ecotourism income (especially foreign tourists)
- The labelling of products (cheeses, honey, jams etc.) as being from a Natura 2000 area can increase sales, both domestic and export
- The Natura 2000 Network is the EU's only network of areas of conservation importance across Europe, and forms an excellent basis for obtaining funds from various EU finance instruments, such as LIFE+, PHARE, SAPARD, Leader+, INTEREG, and Structural Funds from the Rural Development Programme after accession
- A Natura 2000 site can have a very important role in water management

### It is not true that...

- The declaration of a Natura 2000 site affects land ownership
- Properties lose their value as a result of Natura 2000 designation
- All economic activities will be reduced
- Hunting is forbidden
- The construction of new infrastructure is forbidden



## Natura 2000 in Romania

*Romania is one of the most important regions of Europe for richness of wildlife and habitats. We need to protect this biodiversity, and use it to promote the sustainable development of rural areas.*

### What is Natura 2000?

Natura 2000's aim is to safeguard Europe's biodiversity and to promote biodiversity-friendly economic activities.

The Natura 2000 Network is the European Union's main instrument for nature conservation. It is a network of designated sites across the EU, where vulnerable plant and animal species and important habitats must be protected.

Natura 2000 is based on the EU Birds and EU Habitats Directives, which came into force in Romania under Law 462/2001. Romania is obliged to assure protection of any species and habitats mentioned in Law 462.

**The Natura 2000 Network** is expected to cover about 18% of EU territory. It will be an integral part of Romania's rural landscape.

*Selection as a Natura 2000 site is recognition of an area's importance at a European level - a source of pride for local people that also offers considerable economic opportunities.*

**For more information visit**  
[www.natura2000.ro](http://www.natura2000.ro) or contact



The Regional Environment  
Protection Agency Sibiu,  
Str. Hipodromului nr. 2A,

Tel: 0269-232806; 233094;

Fax: 0269 444145;

E-mail: [biodiversitate@arpm7c.ro](mailto:biodiversitate@arpm7c.ro).

Website: [www.ipmsb.ro](http://www.ipmsb.ro)



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## How are Natura 2000 sites chosen?

Potential Natura 2000 Sites are first selected by scientific assessment at the national level. Many sites have already been identified in Romania. Proposals will be complete by late 2006, and passed to the EU for approval in 2007.

*The Natura 2000 network is composed of*

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), for the conservation of natural habitats, and wild fauna and flora, listed in the Habitats Directive
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for the conservation of wild birds listed in the Birds Directive.

Photograph Andreea Bell Begian



## Local involvement in management of Natura 2000 sites

The key for maintaining a balance between economic activities and nature conservation is to have effective management. The Habitats Directive proposes different types of management measures for Natura 2000 sites.

*Proactive measures such as:*

- elaboration of management plans which can be integrated into Local Development Strategies
- economic measures, such as EU agri-environment measures, which provide external funding for management
- voluntary contracts with individual landowners which provide compensation for traditional use of land

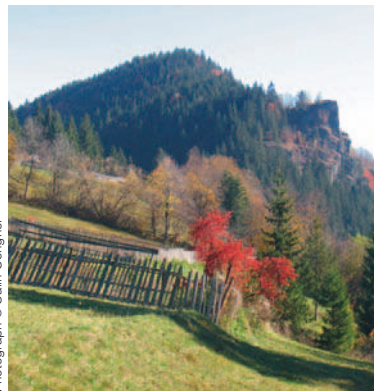
Photograph Martin Wood



*Conservation measures such as*

- ecological reconstruction projects for specific sites
- the obligation for new economic activities to carry out environmental impact studies confirming compatibility with nature conservation aims

Photograph © Calin Cengher



As part of the Natura 2000 process, management plans for designated areas are encouraged. These should be developed in consultation with all interested parties so that practical and effective management solutions are found, that are acceptable to local people and viable in the long term.

## How does the implementation of Natura 2000 affect the lives of local people?

**Natura 2000 - obligations balanced by opportunities**

*Natura 2000 recognises that local people's interests must be protected.*

All measures taken under Natura 2000 must take account of the economic, social and cultural requirements of the area - a principle is enshrined in the EU Habitats Directive. Natura 2000 designation places certain obligations on local people, who will receive compensation by means of special funding and other opportunities.

*Obligations*

- Activities must be avoided that could significantly disturb the species or damage the habitats for which the site is designated
- Positive measures must be taken, where necessary, to maintain these habitats and species
- Land-users must ensure good management so that vulnerable semi-natural habitats and species are maintained

*Opportunities*

- Natura 2000 designation offers a brand image for an area, under which local products and services can be developed and marketing improved
- Increased economic diversification and inward investment
- Special EU agricultural and forestry support for biodiversity-friendly land management in Natura 2000 areas
- Increased access to community development funds to help to maintain the economic viability and social fabric of rural areas.

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