

# The European „Business and Biodiversity Initiative”

András Demeter  
European Commission  
DG Environment

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# What has the European Commission done on Business and Biodiversity

- 2010 target of halting biodiversity loss in Europe: Commission Biodiversity Communication and Action Plan (2006) - to build stronger partnerships with business, including the financial sector
- 2006-7: Contract on piloting Biodiversity Technical Assistance Units in 3 new MS
- Consultations leading to November 2007 Conference in Lisbon by Portuguese Presidency: forum to share experience and expertise on how best to engage business



JANIS PAVLI

FRANCISCO JAVIER GONZALEZ

JAMES O'HARA

FRANCISCO JAVIER GONZALEZ

# EU initiative on B&B

- Build on the foundation of the Lisbon Conference („Message from Lisbon”)
- Complement ongoing actions at international and national level
- To give recognition to business for sustainable entrepreneurial activity
- To support medium-long term partnerships
- Should not give rise to heavy bureaucracy or red-tape

# Actions: general principles

- Tangible and measurable results
- Go beyond legal requirements
- Partnerships, business, MS, NGO,s
- Voluntary nature
- Particular attention to SME's
- EU added value
- No „green-washing”

# Added value of EU dimension

- Integration of biodiversity in major EU policy areas (CAP, regional dev., fisheries, energy, transport, trade..)
- Catalyst for national action, sharing of experience and good practice, communication and mainstreaming of results
- Link to Natura 2000

# Commission Follow-up in 2008

- Continuation of dialogue with a number of priority sectors
- Continuation of Biodiversity Technical Assistance Units project with pro-biodiversity businesses
- A call for tender for a service contract to provide assistance in setting up a technical support facility

# Role of such a facility: to work with interested business sectors (examples)

- To promote awareness of biodiversity protection
- To bench-mark best practice
- Best practice guidance, Natura 2000, eco-tourism, labelling, HNV,..
- Monitoring, recording mechanisms
- Award system to recognise outstanding contribution.....



# International Events

- This conference
- Ninth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity – Business and Biodiversity on Agenda, including that of the High-level segment (Bonn, May, 2008)<sup>1</sup>
- World Conservation Congress (IUCN) (Barcelona, October 2008)<sup>1</sup>

# Biodiversity Technical Advice Unit

**project: Supporting Small & Medium Enterprises to benefit biodiversity in Natura 2000 areas**

**Funded by:** European Commission DG Environment



**implemented:** Birdlife Partners: RSPB, MME, BSPB, OTOP, and ECNC



**Advised by**



# The BTAU project

- Innovative pilot project phase 2007-2009
- 3 countries: Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary
- Identify SMEs with investment potential to encourage and enable sustainable management of Natura 2000 sites
- Gather eligible SMEs into a database
- Negotiating with partner banks to create business development loans at preferential interest rates.
- Devising and testing methodologies, and creating generic tools to help SMEs
- PR and outreach
- A dedicated pro-biodiversity investment market for SMEs created

# Opportunities in the Natura 2000 network

- 18% of EU27  
1 000 000 km<sup>2</sup>  
25,000 sites  
Annual management costs approximately €6.1 billion
- Natura 2000 seen as obstacle to development so far
- Turn “development problem” into a “business opportunity”
- Private sector gap in implementation and funding of the system
- Many SMEs operate within Natura 2000 sites

# Project outcomes 2007

- 3 BTAUs established
- Bespoke methodology for identifying and prioritizing potential pro-biodiversity businesses
- Toolkit for SME assessment developed
- Handbook drafted for developing and implementing pro-biodiversity investments
- Financial market research
- National expertise networks established

# Some activities 2008

- Promotion of loan mechanism across Natura 2000 sites nationally through national partner bank(s)
- Pipeline of businesses applying for the SME pro-biodiversity loan facility
- Capacity building through knowledge sharing with SMEs
- Providing biodiversity expertise in a format accessible for business

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

### **EU Biodiversity Policy including partnerships:**

[ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/index_en.htm)

[ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/partnerships/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/partnerships/index_en.htm)

### **The message from Lisbon:**

[www.countdown2010.net/file\\_download/143](http://www.countdown2010.net/file_download/143)

### **BTAU project:**

[www.smeforbiodiversity.eu](http://www.smeforbiodiversity.eu)