

**IMPLEMENTING NATURA 2000  
IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

**THEMATIC REPORT FOUR:  
CAPACITY BUILDING**

December 2004

## Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
1.1	<i>Production of five thematic reports</i> .....	3
1.2	<i>Focus of this report</i> .....	3
2	Overview of the capacity building issue.....	4
2.1	<i>Capacity building in general</i> .....	4
2.2	<i>Capacity needs in relation to Natura 2000</i> .....	4
2.3	<i>Relevance to the Czech situation</i> .....	6
3	Current institutional arrangements, staff and skills .....	7
3.1	<i>Institutional arrangements</i> .....	7
3.2	<i>Site level capacity and skills</i> .....	8
3.3	<i>Capacity beyond ‘nature conservation’ authorities</i> .....	10
3.4	<i>Lessons for the Czech Republic</i> .....	10
4	National schemes for capacity building.....	12
4.1	<i>Key lessons for the Czech Republic</i> .....	15

## **1 Introduction**

### ***1.1 Production of five thematic reports***

Within the Phare project ‘Implementation of Natura 2000 in the Czech Republic’, a series of reports is being produced covering five main themes, as follows:

- mistakes and problems in Natura 2000 management;
- national sources of Natura 2000 financing;
- conservation management approaches;
- capacity building; and
- transposition and implementation of site management provisions.

The five reports focus on selected sites: the Causses du Quercy in France, the Rhön in Germany, Aldude in Navarra Spain and the New Forest in the UK. However, the site based analysis is placed within the broader context of regional/national experiences and approaches. An overview of the sites and relevant contexts, including national and EU-wide contexts, is given in an additional introductory report. The aim of the reports is to identify and make available, concrete, up to date and accessible information on how ‘old’ EU Member States have approached Natura 2000, including both good and bad practice and lessons learned in the process.

In order to produce the five thematic reports, a series of country-based reports was produced, each covering the five themes. These reports were produced by ACER (France), IDRiSi (Spain) and IEEP (Germany and UK) with additional support and advice from Ecosystems LTD. Apart from being used as the basis for the five thematic reports, these country studies were used as key reference documents for the participants in three Study Tours organised as part of the project during September and October 2004.

### ***1.2 Focus of this report***

This report focuses on capacity-building activities that have been undertaken at the five study sites. In particular, it reviews capacity needs in relation to required personnel, capabilities and skills, as well as technical resources, needed for practical management of sites (including monitoring and preparation of management plans), and relevant solutions. General capacity issues are presented, as well as current local and national capacity, and corresponding capacity needs and what, if any, is being done to address these.

The report draws and builds on an earlier report assessing, capacity needs for managing Natura 2000 sites in the Czech Republic.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Farmer A & Coffey C (2003) MANAGEMENT OF NATURA 2000 SITES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC CAPACITY ASSESSMENT – FINAL REPORT, Institute for European Environmental Policy

## **2 Overview of the capacity building issue**

### ***2.1 Capacity building in general***

The capacity of institutions to implement nature conservation legislation involves a number of different factors that go beyond mere staff numbers compared to workloads. Capacity also refers to the quality of staff in relation to the workload, including particular expertise and skills, and the existence of necessary technical support (eg computers, vehicles, etc). Capacity needs will also be affected by existing capacity externally, in this case in other stakeholders and NGOs.

The basic structure of governments as a whole, ie beyond nature conservation authorities, is also important as are process issues - the issue of relationships within and between institutions at all stages of legislative implementation. Finally, and importantly, capacity is affected by the culture of the relevant institutions.

### ***2.2 Capacity needs in relation to Natura 2000***

Before examining existing skills and capacity, gaps, and approaches to addressing these, it is useful to outline what the key capacity needs have been in relation to Natura 2000 in some of the EU 10 Member States.

- Collection of necessary scientific information, preparation of inventories, adaptation to EU classification system, completion of Standard Data Forms, submission of list to the Commission, etc - the time required will vary, depending in particular on the site interests and pressures, as well as on whether the relevant scientific information is readily available. Information needs are likely to be greater for sites that were not previously designated.

In the Czech Republic there has been a historical focus on some aspects of biodiversity monitoring (eg birds). However, there are gaps that need to be filled.

- Monitoring of the conservation resource – in many ‘old’ Member States existing systems were insufficient. In some cases, eg from species to habitats, the basic biodiversity information required enhancement or a change in focus. Where new sites were designated under the Directive, this also adds to the monitoring burden. However, some significant changes tended to relate to more practical management issues, including pressures on biodiversity. These had been less routinely monitored, or monitoring had been undertaken by other organisations. While the changes in Member States are identifiable, the resource implications have proven difficult to determine, as the needs of Natura 2000 have tended to ‘reform’ existing monitoring efforts, thus obscuring the actual additional burden that the EU legislation has imposed.
- Preparation of management plans and designing/agreeing conservation measures. This is particularly problematic as the plans depend on defining favourable conservation status as an end point for management activity. This

in turn, depends upon a relatively complete understanding of species and habitat objectives in relation to perceived pressures.

- Assessing existing permissions - the implications of the habitats Directive on revisiting earlier permitting decisions, has placed a significant burden on authorities other than those designating and managing Natura 2000 sites. In the UK, for example, English Nature and other competent authorities (eg the Environment Agency and planning authorities) are required to review all existing notifications/consents/permissions in relation to activities taking place in or around a site. The review is thought to last until the end of March 2010. The Environment Agency alone has been reviewing hundreds of permit decisions for emissions to air and water, which might affect Natura 2000 sites. To do this, it has relied heavily on expertise from English Nature. This has resulted in a much greater degree of inter-institutional cooperation and understanding than existed previously. It should be noted that not only does the habitats Directive require this for any potential activity that might impact upon a site/species, but that other Directives (such as IPPC) cite the habitats and birds Directives' requirements as key elements to be considered in future permitting decisions. As IPPC permits are currently being issued, this means that the requirements of the habitats Directive are integrated into new IPPC permitting procedures.

In the Czech Republic IPPC permit conditions are being set based largely on standards set out in medium specific legislation. Apart from a question as to whether this truly meets the integration requirement of IPPC, it is uncertain if this will deliver the objectives of all Natura 2000 sites.

- Inspection and enforcement - in the UK, a network of police wildlife liaison officers (PWLOs) has been created. Coverage is nationwide with a liaison officer in almost all police forces. Many officers have undergone some training in wildlife law, and regular conferences are held with staff from the statutory conservation agencies. Close liaison with licensing staff and locally based colleagues ensures that tip-offs, for example with respect to priority species, can be swiftly followed up and routine inspections undertaken efficiently. The resource implications for enforcement are very difficult to determine.

Enforcement activity already occurs in the Czech Republic and it is possible that the existing structures can be used in the implementation of Natura 2000. However, the additional resources that would be required within this system depend upon the perceived threats. Unauthorised hunting, for example, would be very different in character in Spain and the Czech Republic, thus making comparisons inappropriate.

- Training, awareness and education – in the EU 15 relevant authorities have invested significant resources in training for their staff and others. This has applied to both nature conservation authorities and others (eg habitats Directive related training for English Nature *and* the Environment Agency in the UK). NGOs can also play an important role, much as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in the UK.

Training in the Czech Republic has to be an ongoing process as it will need to reflect developments as implementation progresses, within the Czech Republic but also across the EU, such as the establishment of management plans and interpretation of the Directive's provisions by the European Court of Justice. Training must include other authorities (eg those issuing permits in the regions) and relevant NGOs, farmers groups, etc.

Other needs arise in relation to the following:

1. Ensure compensation or positive payments – relevant authorities;
2. Introduce and apply appropriate assessment, making use of relevant land-use planning for enforcement – relevant authorities;
3. Include provisions within agricultural and environmental measures – Ministry of Environment and other relevant authorities;
4. Identify LIFE programme opportunities – relevant authorities; and
5. Reporting to Czech competent authorities and the European Commission – Ministry of Environment and relevant authorities.

### ***2.3 Relevance to the Czech situation***

The habitats Directive presents different needs for Czech authorities, relating to new scientific information and adaptation to EU classification system. Specific additional needs may emerge as the Commission initiates discussions on the proposed Czech list of sites in the relevant biogeographical regions, and as gaps in site lists are identified. Authorities should be prepared for this, so that additional sites can be forwarded at relatively short notice. It is not desirable for the authorities to have to rely on NGO shadow lists as this may tie authorities in to a list that is not necessarily scientifically robust.

Once sites have been identified and proposed the issue of protecting the ecological assets of sites will emerge. In particular, there should be a review of existing permissions – within and outside of sites, and any effects these may be having on proposed sites. The implications of this for the Czech permitting authorities (eg the Czech Environment Inspectorate) need to be addressed. Additional effort will be needed for appropriate assessments, once the Commission adopts the site lists as SCIs.

Enforcement activity already occurs in the Czech Republic and it is possible that the existing structures can be used in the implementation of Natura 2000. However, the additional resources that would be required within this system depend upon the perceived threats. Unauthorised hunting, for example, would be very different in character in Spain and the Czech Republic, thus making comparisons inappropriate.

The Czech monitoring system would also need to be established to include more species, habitats and sites. This includes both within sites but also throughout the wider territory of the Czech Republic. Training courses would also be needed for different authorities and stakeholders.

### 3 Current institutional arrangements, staff and skills

#### 3.1 Institutional arrangements

The Ministries for Environment, Agriculture, Equipment and Defence all have some responsibility for Natura 2000 in **France**. The Ministry's Nature and Landscapes Department (DNP), conducts policy which contributes to implementation of the Directive (species, habitats and landscape protection).

At the sub-national level the 90 *départements* Prefects supervise implementation of the Habitats Directive. Contributions are also made by the 22 Regional Offices for the Environment (DIREN) and the *départements* Offices for Agriculture and Forestry (DDAF). The National Museum of Natural History also carries out monitoring of the habitats and species on the Natura 2000 sites, and acts more generally as the State's scientific expert body for issues relating to the Habitats and Birds Directives.

No specialised agencies have been established to implement the Habitats Directive. A National Monitoring and Consultation Committee (*Comité national de suivi et de concertation*) was set up in 1996.

In **Germany**, responsibilities are split between a number of governmental agencies, notably the:

- agency for Rural Environment – responsible for promoting and developing agriculture and rural development, and for the conservation of cultural landscapes;
- authority of the Rhön Biosphere Reserve;
- forestry commission;
- lower nature conservation authority; and the
- district administration – which takes the role of the higher nature conservation authority.

In the **UK**, the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has specific strategic responsibility for Natura 2000 areas in England, as well as being responsible for the UK's common interest (including Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England) in formulating, negotiating, implementing and enforcing EU policies and rules. The Government and Defra are advised by English Nature which also promotes the conservation of England's wildlife and natural features. EN advises the government, other agencies, local authorities, interest groups, business, communities and individuals on nature conservation. It regulates activities affecting the special nature conservation sites in England, and enables others to manage land for nature conservation, through grants, projects and information.

Apart from Defra and the nature agencies, the Environment Agency for England and Wales has a major role to play in implementing Natura 2000. New and existing permissions and activities that the EA regulates and carries out have to be undertaken in such a way that the integrity of Natura 2000 sites are not adversely affected.

Other bodies involved in the terrestrial aspects of implementing Natura 2000 include:

- the Forestry Commission - the lead agency in relation to native woodlands;
- the Ministry of Defence – it has a Memorandum of Understanding with Defra regarding land held for the purposes of training and in the interests of national security; and
- the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions - plays a pivotal role in delivering nature conservation objectives through an efficient planning systems that promotes a sustainable pattern of land use.

### **3.2 Site level capacity and skills**

In **France**, the team in charge of Natura 2000 in the Ministry of Environment increased from 1 full time member of staff in 1994 to 10 in 2000. The Nature and Landscapes Department is made up of a staff of 90.

At site level, for both sites (3000 ha and 4800 ha) one person has been needed full time for each site and for two years has been necessary to progress the management plan. The level of study required is Baccalaureate + 4/5. The competencies needed are animation, compilation (technical documents and popular writing), on the ground inventories, etc. The technical resources required to do the job are GIS, cadastre, etc. The financing of the two posts was made possible through State credits from the Ministry of Environment (90%), and on self-financing from the Park (10%).

For the site ‘Vallées de la Rauze et du Vers et vallons tributaires’ the Park is not planning on recruiting to implement the DOCOB. This is due to a lack of financing. For the other site, the implementation of the DOCOB is not an issue for the moment, as the DOCOB is still being developed. The implementation of the DOCOB will be done by the existing staff of the Park. The general issue for the Park is to maintain and perpetuate the jobs created for the development of the DOCOBs.

In **Germany**, technical skills such as understanding of GIS applications, databases and mapping programmes are required in addition to more general skills such as an understanding of land management practices and history, local ecology and site knowledge. An understanding of local customs, a longstanding relationship with local stakeholders, and a good command of the local dialect can also be significant advantages.

In the Rhön pSCI, staff and financial resources are contributed by a number of organisations. It is not possible to say how much staff capacity or financial resource is available for any one site. That said, the main responsibility for overall coordination of site selection, notification, protection and management rests with one person in the Biosphere Reserve authority. This person not only has a long-standing involvement in the protection of the Biosphere Reserve and the Rhön’s national nature reserves, but was also born and raised in the Rhön, and is thus fully integrated into the local social fabric. This significantly improves his capacity to negotiate environmental and landscape benefits.

Most of the work related to developing site inventories was outsourced, by commissioning local consultancies with a background in city and landscape planning, and environmental impact assessment. With regards to achieving site management, it



is being considered to what degree land owners and users such as forestry staff, could be used to take forward certain aspects of site management. In general, however, there is a need for dedicated staff, which focus on the management of the key habitats, not only in terms of monitoring ecological developments but also in terms of intensive liaison with the stakeholders who are using these habitats.

The Rhön LIFE project funding covered most or all of the costs (eg staff time and training) during the project period. However, with the end of the LIFE projects, funding could often not be maintained. Continued investment has not been secured.

In **Spain**, staff are not assigned to specific sites. The Natura 2000 team (headed by Santiago Garcia) includes 19 technical officers who are either assigned to specific areas (GIS, habitats, rivers, fauna and forests) or regions. Two officers are responsible for the Pyrenees area (which includes Alduide). Other specialists are contracted into the team as necessary.

In Navarra, a team of ~ 70 rangers work in the eight districts (Comarcas) of Navarra. The rangers work within the Environment Department but not directly with the Natura 2000 team and there are some problems regarding allocation of responsibilities. Ideally the two teams should work closely together. The situation is currently complex.

The officers in the Natura 2000 team have a range of backgrounds e.g. biology, geography and agronomy. The main training need has been in stakeholder participation. Workshops have been undertaken to fill this gap.

The main human resource need is a sufficient staff resource with a full range of skills (fieldwork, report writing, GIS, stakeholder participation, communication, negotiation etc). Temporary staff with specific skills not found in the team, are employed as needed (if financial resources are sufficient). This approach can create a problem of lack of continuity.

In the **UK**, staff involved in the management of Natura 2000 at the local level identified a large range of skills/knowledge needed for the job. In particular, these included:

- detailed site knowledge;
- species and habitat expertise;
- understanding in land management and conservation practices;
- experience in the handling of maps and GIS information;
- legal understanding;
- financial and accounting skills;
- project management skills; and
- communication and conflict resolution skills.

In addition, historic data and an understanding of national and European developments are also considered helpful.

One full-time member of staff and three part-time staff are responsible for co-ordinating the management of the New Forest cSAC at English Nature. They work

within an area team of 28 staff. The annual budget of the team is approximately £600,000 (excluding salaries), although 75 per cent of this is spent on land management agreements largely outside the New Forest cSAC. The team has a small annual training budget.

In comparison, English Nature's total national budget for 2003/04 is £80.84 million. Eight per cent of this was invested in human resources and skill development ('people and policies'). English Nature also invests in knowledge transfer, eg, organising lunch time seminars for internal staff, and recording expert knowledge on paper, tape or film.

It is interesting to note that in the UK, primary implementation of Natura 2000 is undertaken within ministries that also incorporate the agriculture function. Having said this, in the early days of implementation in the UK, agriculture was covered by a separate ministry. Very detailed discussions were held between the different authorities, with both sides recognising the need to identify implications for the farming community. While English Nature continues with similar high level interaction, much of the focus is now at the local level.

### ***3.3 Capacity beyond 'nature conservation' authorities***

In the **UK**, ecological expertise is not the sole preserve of English Nature. The majority of **other public agencies or authorities** in the area also have their own resident ecologist (eg Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council, National Trust). This internal source of expertise has proven to be very significant in gaining acceptance and funding within the institutions concerned for conservation orientated measures and for a greater openness and cooperation with other bodies on these issues.

The bulk of the cost of management falls to the Forestry Commission which is committed to the delivery of the SAC management plan prepared through a LIFE project. This gives a clear vision of management actions needed over the next 20 years which enables the Forestry Commission to determine the necessary resources to carry these out.

There is also an increasing need for local contractors with specialised skills in restoration of woodland habitats and removal of exotic species. These people have become increasingly successful in obtaining regular work and income in Natura 2000 sites. Many have gone on to form successful local companies and businesses to continue their activities.

**NGOs** in the **Navarra** region are generally weak with few paid professional staff and not very involved in the Natura 2000 process. NGOs include Ecologistas en Accion, Navarra Fund for the Protection of Nature (GURELUR), GOROSTI and various small local groups. There is no SEO/BirdLife officer in the region. The production of a regional management plan is an additional way in which to open up new opportunities and generate new contact with stakeholders, including NGOs.

### ***3.4 Lessons for the Czech Republic***

Future resource requirements in the Czech Republic depend upon:

1. the degree to which Natura 2000 adds requirements over existing biodiversity protection;
2. the extent of pressures adversely affecting Natura 2000 sites;
3. the ability of institutions to address these problems from current practices; and
4. the degree to which other institutions are working to collaborate to achieve Natura 2000 objectives.

A key lesson from the EU 15 is that local teams for sites need to include a wide range of expertise. This can be problematic in the Czech Republic as significant reserves are required. However, a lesson from Spain and the UK is that others can help in providing expertise, potentially offering significant additional input. Thus the Czech Republic should seek to develop appropriate partnerships where it can.

In the 1990s the Czech Republic's sectoral approach to government became pronounced. This caused a number of problems, in that environmental protection is seen as the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment – not other ministries. Thus not only do these ministries need some additional staff (at senior enough level) to deal with environmental issues, but they also require a cultural shift. To deliver Natura 2000 objectives this cultural change needs to occur not just at national level but also at local level where officials interact on individual sites.

#### 4 National schemes for capacity building

All Member States undertake various forms of training. Much of this is specifically related to Natura 2000. However, as Natura 2000 is now an integrated part of nature conservation management generally, it will also form part of wider conservation training. The information from France, below, forms one example.

In **France**, efforts have been made to inform, educate and make people aware of the natural environment, and specifically of the Natura 2000 network and what it involves. This has been particularly important given the widespread stakeholder resistance to Natura 2000 which was a major block on progress during the 1990s.

Several tools were developed in order to assist in creating the DOCOB:

- a guide to methodology was developed in 1998, after an experimental operation on 37 pilot sites was carried out, co-financed by the EU. This guide deals with the development of DOCOBs;
- a training plan was implemented in 1999 for the staff of State Services as well as for technical operators. It also contributes to an exchange of experience between regions.
- the ‘cahier d’habitats’ presents for each habitat of the Directive, a summary of the scientific knowledge and management recommendations. Its compilation was assigned to scientific and natural environment managers. The first volume on forest habitats was published in November 2001. The National Museum of Natural History takes a large part in the development of these ‘cahiers d’habitats’.

The DOCOB national training plan has been implemented by the Ministry of Environment. Its goal is to train the staff in building of the Natura 2000 network, site management, and monitoring of the Natura 2000 network (mapping, contracts, DOCOBs, etc).

The ATEN (Technical Workshop of Natural Spaces) also manages a training programme for Natura 2000. An agreement was concluded in June 1999, and renewed in 2000, between the Ministry and ATEN to formalise the arrangement. This training is meant for operators and developers of sites, with training provided for staff in administrations in charge of implementing the Directive, technical operators at site level, and members of local steering committees set up for Natura 2000 sites. In 1999, there were nine training sessions on developing and implementing the DOCOBs, four interregional seminars to enable the players concerned to acquire a ‘common culture’, and training aimed at preparing guidelines for the contract-based management of sites. In 2000, almost 40 training sessions took place. In 1999, 199 people took part in the training sessions; in 2000, 152 took part.

The level of training in France is quite extensive. Much of this will be new, specifically aimed at implementation of Natura 2000. The information provided does not, however, indicate, for example, the length of training.

A number of other key documents have been published, including:

- 24 page leaflet on *Natura 2000: 10 questions, 10 answers* published by the Ministry of Environment. The leaflet is intended for the public, answering general questions on protection methods, approaches, funding, etc;
- 18 page brochure on the habitats Directive;
- four page newsletter; and
- a leaflet with concrete examples of the Natura 2000 on the ground.

A dedicated website was also launched in France in 2000, providing information on the sites by species, by geographical location and by habitat type. It also has a news section.

In Hessen in **Germany**, the Ministry for Interior, Agriculture, Forestry and Nature Conservation in Hessen has not offered training specifically directed at improving awareness or general understanding of the habitats Directive and/or Natura 2000 amongst nature conservation staff. However, external consulting staff have been trained in order to support their work to prepare site inventories (ie consultancy staff). Training has focused on the legal requirements and practical implementation of the habitats Directive. In particular, training was required in identifying habitat types as defined by the habitats Directive.

A number of conservation courses addressing subjects such as land management and Natura 2000 are offered by government-funded conservation academies or NGO-run nature conservation centres. Participation in their programmes and seminars is optional, however. The lack of formal training is partly off-set by an exchange of experience in regular (regional) team meetings.

There is no specific budget for Natura 2000 related training.

In the **UK**, English Nature, alongside NGOs, is instrumental in providing public information on the implementation and management of Natura 2000. On a more technical level, English Nature provides expertise to site managers, eg through providing:

- site management statements and conservation objectives, and related management advice;
- assistance in writing funding applications, management contracts etc; and
- information on the distribution of species and habitat features, their sensitivity and conservation status, in light of an appropriate assessment of plans or projects.

All new members of staff at English Nature are provided with training on the EU habitats and birds Directives. There is further an annual programme to address capacity needs and career development. Most of the training is administered or organised through English Nature's head office, although some local training is also undertaken. On a more individual level, all staff are managed by a line manager/superior and thus are part of an internal review system. This allows for the identification of training needs.

Local teams are further supported by a national team of species and habitats experts, and administrative and legal staff in English Nature's head office. They also provide

legal interpretations, case files, and more targeted technical guidance such as on the impacts of developments or pollution on habitats or species. A series of internal Habitats Regulation (the UK's implementing legislation for the habitats Directive) Guidance Notes have for instance been developed, covering:

- appropriate assessments;
- review of existing permissions and other consents;
- determination of 'likely significant effect';
- the consideration of 'alone and in combination';
- determination of 'not directly connected to the management of the site';
- permitted activities; and
- compensation for habitat damage.

These and similar notes may also provide guidance to other national and local government departments, including Local Planning Authorities, the Forestry Commission, Water Authorities, etc.

Local staff members do not always feel that they have access to sufficient training. Much of the skills required for the development of the site management plan and any follow-up activities were acquired in a process learning-by-doing. Up-front investment in staff skills was considered absolutely necessary. A review of skills was undertaken during the first LIFE project, in form of an Index of Training Requirements.

In **Spain**, nature conservation is the responsibility of the regional governments. There are no national structures in place to respond to capacity needs at the regional or local levels at which Natura 2000 implementation takes place, other than national committees and networks, such as the Environmental Authorities Network. The latter is a forum of representatives from national and regional governments, in which issues to do with environmental integration in other policy areas are discussed. In a sense, this Network helps to build the capacity of regional governments to deal with such issues, including the question of Natura 2000 financing and management.

In the UK it is important to note that a number of NGOs have been heavily involved in detailed and extensive information provision to stakeholders. This has included not only major environmental NGOs, such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, but also organisations such as the National Farmers' Union.

The activities in France represent a clear benchmark to follow. **It is important to note that while extensive proactive information is provided, systems are also in place for providing reactive information.** The production of published information (whether paper or web-based) is important. Implementing this level of stakeholder information provision could be a challenge in the Czech Republic, although the use of existing systems where possible (including through other ministries) may help reduce some costs, as would the use of relevant and effective NGOs.

The main conclusions, for the Czech Republic, are that training must involve a wide range of staff in different organisations, may require a number of years to complete and needs to address a wide range of relevant issues. The intensity of training may

also vary, depending upon the specific level of involvement of staff in implementing Natura 2000.

#### ***4.1 Key lessons for the Czech Republic***

It is evident that successful implementation of Natura 2000 demands a combination of technical/scientific skills as well as skills in relation to communication, economic analysis, financial and project management. Identifying and promoting the benefits of Natura 2000 to local stakeholders is a particular challenge, demanding particular staff.

In Germany, Spain and the UK, responsibility for nature conservation lies at the regional level. Devolved responsibility for implementing Natura 2000 is not in itself problematic, but it is likely to place additional demands on resources, and presents challenges in terms of ensuring coherent approaches to Natura 2000 at the national level, ie in relation to site selection, management, monitoring and reporting. Several federal Member States are grappling with these issues. In Germany, submission of a proposed list of sites has been severely delayed due to problems at the *Länder* level;

Member States have still some time to fully designate sites and implement conservation management. France, Germany and UK had existing nature conservation structures in place before the requirements of Natura 2000 emerged. Assessment of the specific additional 'burden' of implementing Natura 2000 is therefore particularly problematic in these countries.