

Implementation of Natura 2000 network in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region

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Art. 1, 5 of L. 157/92 states that regions and provinces must individuate protected areas for birds (Dir. "Birds"); art. 3, 1, of DPR 357/97 states that regions and provinces must indicate the areas to be designated as SACs (Dir. "Habitats").

Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region has indicated 62 pSACs and 8 SPAs. 61 pSACs and 7 SPAs has been recognized in 1995 in the framework of project BiolItaly; one more pSAC has been individuated in 1999 and all have been accepted with DGR n. 435 of 25.02.2000. On 3 april 2000 the Ministry of Environment has emitted a decree with a list of Natura 2000 sites for Italy.

With DGR 327 of 18.02.2005 the SPA Alpi Carniche has been increased in size and the SPA Carso has been designated. The pSACs have been approved by the EU with the decisions of 22 december 2003 and of 7 december 2004. However, Italy has not indicated a sufficient number of Natura 2000 sites. In particular, several areas in the Karst area had not been indicated. For this reason, in february 2006 the Region has designated the SAC IT3340006 "Carso triestino e goriziano".

It must be mentioned the case of the pSAC "Magredi del Cellina" and IBA 053 "Magredi di Pordenone", where rallies were carried out.

On 8.4.2005 the EU has started an infraction procedure against Italy, due to the not accomplishment of art. 4 and 5 of Bird directive and of art. 6 of Habitat directive. The DDL 175/2005 was also deliberated, in order to take urgent safeguard measures in Magredi del Cellina. Furthermore, the designation of SPA IT3311001 "Magredi del Cellina e Meduna" has been proposed, in order to extend the safeguard regulations to wider areas than IBA 053 "Magredi di Pordenone". Hence, at present FVG Region has almost completed Natura 2000 site designation and is revising the IBA 2002 inventory.

The situation in FVG Region can be summarized as follows:

- total surface (SAC+SPA): 137.297 ha (17% FVG).*
- IBA 2002 surface: 297.880 ha (36% FVG).*
- protected area surface: 53.692 ha (6,6% FVG)*
- protected area and Natura 2000 site surface: 142.919 ha (18% FVG)*
- number of habitats of community interest (annex I dir. Habitat): 70.*

- number of species of community interest (annex II and IV dir. Habitat): 92 animal sp + 22 plant sp.
- number of bird species (annex I dir.Uccelli): 120.

Safeguard actions

The Region has carried out several interventions for the safeguard of habitats and species of community interest that are at risk. In the site "Risorgive dello Stella" a number of interventions has been carried out to increase the upwelling habitats of community interest and to requalify or maintain the habitats present, functional to the safeguard of species included in annex II of the directive. Similar projects have been started in the sites "Palude Selvote", "Paludi di Gonars", "Cavana di Monfalcone", "Torbiere di Casasola e Andreuzza", "Valle del Medio Tagliamento".

Safeguard tools

At present the Region FVG does not have legislative or administrative tools that allow an effective safeguard of the territories of interest; with regard to the species included in annexes II and IV of the Habitat directive, the existing legislation (L.R. n. 34/81) is not sufficient. The only tool that is currently available is therefore the Assessment of Impact (DGR 2600/2002). A proper system of legislative tools that allow to apply the EU directives related to Natura 2000 network on the regional territory is currently under preparation.

Such a legal tool will regulate:

- the safeguard of species of annex II and IV of the Habitats directive
- the safeguard norms for Natura 2000 sites
- the conservation norms
- the possibility to adopt Management Plans
- a more exhaustive regulation of the assessment of impact of plans and projects
- the penalties

How to finance Natura 2000 Network?

The EU has created three financial tools to sustain the implementation of Natura 2000 network:

- Structural Funds
- Life plus
- Rural Development Policy

The EU Communication of 15.07.2004, "Natura 2000 financing" [COM(2004) 431] clearly indicates how the policies of biodiversity conservation should be integrated in the other European policies.

According to the EU, Natura 2000 can enhance both the economic development (services associated to the ecosystems, provision of food and forestry products, activities directly connected to the sites such as tourism, etc) and the social state improvement (diversification of employment options, stabilization of social framework, increase of quality of life, safeguard of cultural heritage, etc). However, the EU also recognizes that Natura 2000 can have negative impacts on economic activities (decrease of land value, limitations to agriculture and fishing, variation in infrastructure interventions, limitation of extractive or forestry activities, etc). According to EU calculation, the management cost of Natura 2000 is of 6,1 billions of euros per year for UE-25. After having taken into account different possibilities of financing Natura 2000, the EU has stated that the best approach is to use the already existing funds (Natura 2000 must thus be integrated in the other community policies).

This approach would allow:

- *to integrate Natura 2000 site management in a wider management of community territories (in particular integrating Nat2000 with the common agriculture policy and the rural development policy);*
- *for the Member States, to define the more indicated policies and interventions considering the national and regional peculiarities, priorities and requirements;*
- *to avoid the overlapping of too many EU financial tools.*

The new Rural Development Program 2007-2013 is currently in progress,, according to Reg. CE 1698/2005.

The tool has a strategical relevance, as agricultural activities are of the utmost importance for territory management and biodiversity conservation.

In this framework, particular relevance is given to the measures included in Axis 2 "management of the territory":

- *Natura 2000 Payments: the tool to compensate the loss of income and the higher costs related to the adoption of Natura 2000 regulations in an agricultural framework;*
- *Agroenvironmental Payments: the tool to favour the sustainable use of resources;*
- *Measure "Not-Productive Investments": the tool to realize structures such as nature trails, visitor centers and infrastructures to improve fruition.*