

GENERAL PROJECT INFO	
Dataset ID	BSNN 4 - Best Practices in Public Support to the Establishment of Natura 2000 Sites
Project title	Public Support for the Sustainable Management of the Natura 2000 Sites along the Black Sea Coast
Project acronym	n/a
Project centre	<a href="#">Black Sea NGO Network, Varna, Bulgaria</a>
Associated programme	NGO Support Programme 2007 - 2009 - FM of EEA
Beginning date	1/5/2009
End date	31/8/2010
Ongoing	no
LOCATION	
Geographical coverage	Bulgarian Black Sea coast
Area Type	coastal area
Sea-area	Black Sea
Coastal zone	Bulgaria
DESCRIPTIONS	
Best Practice Summary	<p><i>The case:</i> After careful analysis of the situation in the country the experts of the organization identified a significant general issue to be addressed by the project, namely the insufficient public support for the protection of biological diversity and the introduction of the Natura 2000 sites along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast in combination with inadequate capacity of civil society to influence the public sector toward proper use of the principles of sustainable development in the process of biodiversity protection. Those problems were particularly obvious against the background of a mighty lobbyist campaign against Natura 2000, which shaped negative attitudes towards it in the whole society. Even the environmental NGO community and concerned representatives of the media and the authorities were not sufficiently acquainted with the network concept, its aims and the strategy of its enforcement; the availability of reference materials was limited and there was almost no significant hands-on expertise in intersectoral exchange and dialogue on issues of the environment and Natura 2000 in particular.</p> <p>The perceived problems and needs helped to identify the project target group including representatives of NGOs, media, independent experts, as well as civil servants from local authorities and government agencies with functions related to Natura 2000, such as environment tourism, energy production, agriculture, forestry etc., as well as representatives of the local communities and businesses.</p> <p><i>The change process.</i> The project goal was to provide public support to the protection of biodiversity in Natura 2000 sites along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast through strengthening the capacity of civil society to influence the work of the public sector to implement sustainable solutions for environmental management, partly using the experience of a Norwegian participant. The specific objectives of the were: to improve the knowledge about biodiversity and the access to reference materials about Natura 2000 and the process of its enforcement; to develop the skills and practical experience of civil society organizations and media to influence society and the public sector in connection with the introduction of Natura 2000</p>

legislation; and to improve the efficiency of cooperation and help establish effective partnerships and dialogue on sustainable solutions about Natura 2000 places between regional actors from the civil society sector and the authorities and businesses with involvement of a Norwegian expert.

The project has achieved its objectives by implementing informational, educational, campaigning and planning activities, associated with protection of biodiversity and the enforcement of Natura 2000 along the Black Sea coast. The activities comprised: the holding of two educational seminars for representatives of NGOs, media, local experts and businesses; the development and publication of a set of thematic materials by Bulgarian authors and the Norwegian expert at the dedicated information and reference website located at [natura.bsnn.org](http://natura.bsnn.org); the holding of a campaign against fragmentation of the coastal Natura 2000 sites; the preparation of concerned stakeholders in the region of the Bosnia SCI for planning the site management and the production of a draft management plan; the holding of a round table for exchange of expertise between NGOs, media and the authorities and the setting up of an informal network for continuation of project activities on national level and with trans-border aspects

*The outcome:* The activities implemented under the project contributed to a considerable degree to the attainment of the project goal. In general the gradual process of recognition of the significance of nature protection, conservation and biodiversity protection is taking firm root in the public attitudes. Parallel to it is going the process of strengthening of civil society and consolidation of its influence on the public sector, especially on decisions related to the environment. The public attitude and media pressure in particular exercised a positive influence on the work of administrations. In this context the public support for Natura 2000 along the coast is growing.

*Lessons and emerging best practices:* The project activities achieved their envisaged results. Therefore we can claim that the NGOs, media and civil servants representing the administrations have improved their knowledge of the biodiversity protection and the enforcement of Natura 2000; a good number of experts from the target group and the wider public have improved their knowledge, access to information and reference materials about Natura 2000 along the coast; the organized public has improved its practical knowledge and skills to exercise influence on the public sector and started to participate in effective intersectoral partnerships

**Keywords**

Natura 2000, Black Sea coast, Public involvement

**Data theme**

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT/NATURA 2000

**CENTRE-INFORMATION**

**Project centre**

[Black Sea NGO Network, Varna, Bulgaria](#)

**Role of research centre**

Leader

**Other partners and countries**

Bourgas Association of Ecological and Rural Tourism (BAEST)

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**ADMINISTRATION**

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Collating-centre	<a href="#">Black Sea NGO Network</a>
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