



***PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE
DIVERSITY STRATEGY***

Geneva and Strasbourg, 24 September 2004

STRA CO (2004) 3 b rev2

**COUNCIL FOR THE PAN-EUROPEAN
BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY**

**THIRD INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE
“BIODIVERSITY IN EUROPE”**

**Eighth Meeting of the Council
for the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy**

**19-21 January 2004
Palacio de Congresos
Madrid, Spain**

**FOLLOW UP OF THE KYIV BIODIVERSITY RESOLUTION:
AGRICULTURE AND BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN PROPOSAL**

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With contributions from

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Implementation of the Kyiv Biodiversity Resolution: Agriculture and Biodiversity

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| Title of Action Proposal: | Facilitating the implementation of agriculture and biodiversity targets of the Kyiv biodiversity resolution |
| Lead Government (s): | To be determined |
| Co-operating Agency/ Supporting Organization | FAO, Council of Europe, European Environment Agency (EEA), UNEP, European Commission, IUCN, ECNC and other relevant institutions and organizations |
| Duration of the Action Proposal: | Start: 2004 End: 2008 |

Strategic Framework of the Action Proposal:

At the 5th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Kyiv, Ukraine in May 2003, the European Ministers of Environment and Heads of Delegations of the States participating in the process of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity agreed to halt the loss of biological diversity at all levels in the pan-European region by the year 2010 in the Kyiv Biodiversity Resolution. The Governments also agreed to two targets on agriculture and biodiversity:

By 2006, the identification, using agreed common criteria, of all high nature value areas in agricultural ecosystems in the pan European region will be complete. By 2008, a substantial proportion of these areas will be under biodiversity-sensitive management by using appropriate mechanisms such as rural development instruments, agri-environmental programmes and organic agriculture, to inter alia support their economic and ecological viability.

By 2008, financial subsidy and incentive schemes for agriculture in the pan European region will take the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in consideration.

Action Proposal Summary:

Background:

The loss of biological diversity on much of Europe's farmland is largely a result of the continuing decline in traditional, extensive and mixed farming practices, the intensification of agriculture and the abandonment of farming in certain regions.

The participants to the "High-Level Pan-European Conference on Agriculture and Biodiversity," organised by the Council of Europe with UNEP and the French Government, in Paris in June 2002, recognized these trends as well as the high value for society of the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity on agricultural land. Wildlife diversity, genetic diversity of agricultural species, varieties and breeds, and the life support functions of biodiversity, wisely managed in the wider context of sustainable agriculture and rural development, serve people in rural areas, consumers of agricultural goods and services, as well as society at large. They therefore recommended, *inter alia*, the further identification of high nature-value (HNV) areas in agricultural ecosystems in order to apply biodiversity-sensitive management by means of rural development instruments, especially agri-environmental programmes, and to support their economic viability in order to prevent land abandonment.

It was suggested at the Conference that initiatives should be developed which integrate biodiversity considerations into the agricultural sector in European Union Member States and non-EU States of the Pan-European region. Under the European Union, an important objective of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) reform, as stated in Agenda 2000, is a stronger integration of environmental objectives into the CAP.

To invite and empower the farming community to better manage and conserve natural resources and landscapes is a core interest. As described in the Communication by the European Commission to the European Council “Partnership for Integration: A Strategy for Integrating Environment into EU Policies,” the agricultural sector is seen as a key target to foster this needed policy integration. The multifunctionality model of European agriculture, defined for the first time at the Luxembourg European Council in 1997 and highlighted in many European strategies adopted in the last few years, also supports this view. The results of the Luxembourg Summit of June 2003 give a clear message that the reform of the agricultural policy can no longer be seen as a mere sectoral issue; but as a socio-political task responding to society’s demands to achieve better environmental protection, consumer protection, animal welfare and social equity. The Luxembourg Agreement on the CAP reform - with the main results of decoupling direct payments from production, introducing cross-compliance of payments with environmental standards and a compulsory modulation to strengthen from 2005 onwards rural development instruments, especially agri-environment programmes - can in the long term lead to a substantial reduction of negative impacts of the CAP on farming and non-farming biodiversity that accompany the trend of intensification of agricultural methods.

In the Pan-European region, traditional agricultural systems have shaped the rural environment and created habitats for a wide range of species, many of which today are of particular conservation concern (EEA-UNEP, in preparation). Extensively managed permanent meadows and grasslands, mosaic structures formed by agricultural areas and natural assets like hedges, ponds, or slopes, contribute to species rich habitats with high nature value. The importance of HNV farmland for biodiversity today is widely accepted and is also recognized in the EU Regulation on Rural Development, amongst other EU documents. Although the identification of all HNV areas has not yet been carried out at the Pan-European level, Cidrad and Hopkins (IUCN, 1998) estimated 25% of the total agricultural area in CEE to be valuable for nature conservation and the EEA and UNEP (in preparation) point out that preliminary estimates show that roughly 20% of countryside in the European Union qualifies as HNV farmland.

Proposal:

Many policy instruments already developed to ensure the adequate management and protection of HNV farmland (e.g. agri-environment programmes) are implemented under the responsibility of individual governments. In the case of the European Union, through the Common Agriculture Policy and measures in Regulation EC 1783/2003. Nevertheless, the PEBLDS forum could further contribute to the management of Europe’s biodiversity by stimulating discussions on financial subsidy and incentive schemes for agricultural activities, applicable in the Pan-European region.

The development and establishment of a mechanism to promote discussions between the biodiversity and the agriculture sectors, resulting in a co-operation on a few joint activities focusing on those matters affecting biodiversity, is an additional activity supporting the overall PEBLDS aim to integrate biodiversity considerations into all economic sectors. An example of such a process has been recently initiated between the Environment for Europe/PEBLDS and the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE). A further recommendation, deriving from the High Level Conference in Paris in 2002, is to organise a joint conference between Ministers of the Environment and Ministers of Agriculture of the pan European region.

The PEBLDS could assist countries in the technical work that needs to be carried out at the Pan-European level, such as the identification of HNV farmland, and the assessment of the distribution and management status of HNV farmland, by joining forces with the EEA and other institutions and organisations working on this issue. The PEBLDS, with its partners, could also take the lead in the preparation and dissemination of capacity building materials with targeted information on biodiversity-sensitive management of HNV farmland to countries in Eastern and South-eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

Objectives:

- Develop methodologies for the identification of HNV farmland, taking into account all components of agriculture biodiversity as defined in Annex 2 to decision V/5 of the COP to the CBD.
- Identify HNV farmland and assess their distribution and conservation status at the Pan-European level.
- Promote adequate management of HNV farmland in order to maintain a high degree of biodiversity and landscapes in the Pan-European region.
- Identify measures that can decrease the current trend of agricultural intensification and crop and livestock homogenisation.
- Identify and promote measures to reduce or manage land abandonment to as to minimise the negative impacts on agriculture biodiversity and create opportunities to create other HNV habitats.
- Promote conversion of agriculture intensive areas into more environmentally sound managed areas including through labelling of products, organic farming, promoting quality of life and health benefits and others.
- Integrate biodiversity and landscape considerations in financial subsidy and incentive schemes in the Pan-European region.
- Build capacity through the dissemination of targeted information on biodiversity-sensitive management of high nature value farmland.
- Emphasize the socio-economic and cultural (including landscape and tourism) benefits in assessing the national values of farming activities and agricultural areas.
- Raise awareness on the importance and potential economic benefits of developing and promoting marketing of local and traditional products supporting maintenance and conservation of agricultural biodiversity.

Outputs:

- Facilitation of the process for national governments to develop inventories identifying the distribution, assessing the management and protection status of existing HNV farmland in the Pan-European region: agreed HNV concept, elaboration of guidelines, sharing of experiences at regional level; rough estimates of concentration of HNV farmland.
- Recommendations to the European Union and non-EU countries for the adequate management of HNV farmland.
- Dissemination of materials targeting information on the importance of biodiversity-sensitive management of HNV farmland in the Pan-European region to farmers, consumers, and other groups of a wider public. This should lead to:
 - Increased awareness among farmers on the importance of conserving biodiversity and of HNV farmland and farming practices to maintain them;
 - Consumer awareness about the importance of environmentally friendly farming methods and labelling with references to organic agriculture, geographical origin or animal welfare to promote responsible consumer choice and environmentally-friendly consumption.
- Set up a mechanism to improve the dialogue between agricultural and environmental authorities, national farm organisations and stakeholders, on the basis of already existing mechanisms.
- Assessment of national socio-economic and cultural values of farming activities and agricultural areas, taking into account *inter alia* the landscape and tourism.

Activities:

| Activity | Leading Actors | Timeframe |
|--|---|-----------|
| Further development and elaboration of the HNV concept; agreement on the use of a common HNV concept in the pan European region; guidelines for the identification of HNV farmland in the Pan- | EU and non-EU governments, EEA (for EU member countries), UNEP (for EECCA countries), | 2004-2005 |

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|--|--|-----------|
| European region based on sharing of experiences at sub regional and regional level, and national input from EU and non-EU governments; | and other relevant institutions and organizations | |
| Preparation of recommendations for the conservation of HNV farmland to the European Union policy-making bodies and non-EU countries | European Commission, EEA, IUCN and other relevant institutions and organizations | 2005-2006 |
| Establishment of appropriate mechanisms to promote co-operation between the agricultural and biodiversity sectors, national farm organisations and stakeholders in the Pan-European region; preparation of a proposal for a framework for cooperation and initial joint activities | Pan European governments involved in the Environment for Europe process, Council of Europe, UNEP | 2004-2006 |
| Organization of a Conference to discuss how best integrate biodiversity considerations into the agricultural sector | IUCN, PEBLDS, European Commission | 2006 |
| Develop and compile capacity-building materials for targeted groups (farmers, extension services, etc.) on biodiversity-sensitive management of HNV farmland in the Pan-European region | Council of Europe, UNEP, IUCN, IEEP, | 2004-2006 |
| Develop ways and means to build consumers awareness on the importance of conservation of HNV farmland and opportunities for society contribution to this task | Council of Europe, UNEP, IUCN, IEEP, consumer organisations and mass media | 2004-2006 |
| Raise farmers awareness on the importance of conserving biodiversity and of HNV farmland and farming practices to maintain them | Council of Europe, UNEP, IUCN | 2005-2006 |
| Disseminate information on biodiversity-sensitive management of HNV farmland through various means (sub-regional workshops, consultation meetings, etc.) | European Commission, Council of Europe, UNEP, IUCN, IEEP and others | 2006-2008 |

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Project:

Indicators that could be useful to evaluate the results and impacts of the above activities include:

- Availability of national inventories of HNV farmland and/or estimates of the highest concentration of HNV farmland.
- Recommendations to the European Union policy-making bodies and non-EU countries.
- Establishment of mechanisms for cooperation between the agriculture and biodiversity sectors.
- Publication of capacity-building materials on HNV management.
- Completion of sub-regional workshops.

Cost of Project: Expressed in Euros

| Activity | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | TOTAL |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Funding requested from government(s), private sector (to be fundraised): | 150.000 | 150.000 | 50.000 | 50.000 | 50.000 | 450.000 |
| Consultancies, Memoranda of Understanding with cooperating and supporting organizations, travel, sub-regional workshops, publications and reporting costs | | | | | | |
| Co-financing of supporting organization, institution or NGO (cash and in-kind): Including staff-time, logistical support | 10.000 | 10.000 | 10.000 | 10.000 | 10.000 | 50.000 |
| Total Cost of the Project | 160.000 | 160.000 | 60.000 | 60.000 | 60.000 | 500.000 |