

MEETING REPORT FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE SELNAT

Project:	SELNAT: HOW TO MAKE NATURA 2000 WORK PROPERLY?		
Subject:	meeting Follow-up Committee SELNAT project		
Meeting date:	20/04/2007		
Place:	Division Forest, Nature & Landscape, KUL		
Participants:	Aline Van der Werf Didier Vieuxtemps Christel Thermol Katty Wouters Johan Toebat Fons Beyers Kurt Sannen Sophie Salle De Visscher Frédéric Marie Etienne Research team Marie Mahy Charles-Hubert Born Valérie Grogna Els Ameloot Patrick Endels Gregory Mahy Julien Taymans Jan Vincke Stan Weyns	Belspo Fédération Wallonne de l'Agriculture - syndicat Union wallonne des villes et des communes Regionaal Landschap Noord-Hageland Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos, Buitendienst Vlaams-Brabant De Boerenbond studiedienst Agentschap natuur en bos Service éco-conseil l'Union wallonne des Entreprises Natagora Université Catholique de Louvain Université Catholique de Louvain Université Catholique de Louvain Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Faculté universitaire des Sciences agronomiques de Gembloux Faculté universitaire des Sciences agronomiques de Gembloux Resource Analysis Resource Analysis	
Distribution:	Participants and projectteam		
Reporters:	Stan Weyns	Document reference:	6041-42-015-03
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1 Goal and agenda of the meeting

The goal of the meeting is to inform the follow-up committee of the context, the goals and the methodology of the SELNAT project and to get feedback from them on the proposition.

The following points were presented and discussed

- *Welcome and introduction*
- *Presentation of the The SELNAT-project team*
- *Background of the project proposal SELNAT*
- *Presentation and discussion of research framework of SELNAT*

- *Presentation of the of the possible study sites*
- *Presentation of the expectations concerning the Users Committee*

2 Introduction (Aline Van der Werf, BELSPO)

At the start of the meeting the program manager of BELSPO, Aline Van Der Werf introduces the background of the project proposal. The project is situated within the framework of Second Call for proposals (Energy, Transport and mobility, Agro-food, Health and environment, Biodiversity, Terrestrial (incl. freshwater) and marine ecosystems of the North Sea, and Transversal research) of the programme 'Science for a Sustainable Development (SSD)' from the Belgian Federal Public Planning Service, Science Policy. After an introduction on the position of BELSPO in Belgian science she gives an overview of the other project proposals that were selected in the first and second call. Finally, she clarifies the role of the follow-up committee and illustrates the mutual benefits that can be gained from cooperation between researchers and policy makers.

The powerpoint-file of this presentation is attached to this meeting report.

3 Presentation of the SELNAT-project team

WHO	RESEARCH INSTITUTE	TASKS
Jan Vincke Greet Nulens Stan Weyns	Resource Analysis	Coordination Social aspects
Prof. Dr. Gregory Mahy Julien Taymans	FUSAGx	Ecological aspects
Prof. Dr. Martin Hermy Dr. Ir. Patrick Endels Dr. Els Ameloot	Division Forest, Nature and Landscape - KULeuven	Ecological aspects
Charles-Hubert Born Marie Mahy	UCL	Legal Aspects
Prof. Dr. Daniel Tyteca Valérie Grogna	UCL	Economic aspects

4 Presentation of the The SELNAT-Follow-Up Committee

The table below presents a list of persons invited for the Follow-Up Committee and willing to join this committee. The list is not definitive or fixed. The project team has tried to make a first selection taking into account the interdisciplinarity of the project and the purpose of the Follow-Up-Committee. The primal purpose of this forum is to give remarks on the assumptions and methods that are used within the framework of the project and to discuss the general findings. For the more local discussions concerning the local study areas subgroups will be formed.

Action: The follow-up-committee goes through this list and gives feedback to the research team if they feel that some stakeholders are missing.

person	background
Michel Terlinden	Société Royale Forestière
Etienne Snyers	Nature Terres Forêts - représentant des propriétaires ruraux
Didier Vieuxtemps	Fédération Wallonne de l'Agriculture - syndicat
Marc Thirion	Direction générale de l'agriculture
Christel Thermol	Union wallonne des villes des communes
Kris Decler	INBO

Wouter Van Landuyt	INBO
Bart Vercoutere	Vrienden van Heverleebos en Meerdaalwoud
Katty Wouters	Regionaal Landschap Noord-Hageland
Johan Toebat	Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos, Buitendienst Vlaams-Brabant
Joos Dessein	ILVO
Maarten Puls	Provincie Antwerpen
Fons Beyers	De Boerenbond studiedienst
Kurt Sannen	Agentschap natuur en bos
Dirk Bogaert	Maritiem Instituut/ Artevelde
Marie Etienne	Natagora
Jacqueline Saintenoy-Simon	Ardenne & Gaume
Lionel Delvaux	Inter-Environnement Wallonie (IEW)
Jean-Yves Paquet	Société d'études ornithologiques AVES
Catherine Hallet	DGRNE
Jean Renault	Division de la Nature et des Forêts (DNF) - Directeur de la Division de la Nature
Sophie Salle	Service éco-conseil
De Visscher Frédéric	l'Union wallonne des Entreprises

In the meanwhile, BESLPO has proposed to add Els Martens (Agentschap Natuur en Bos) and E. Baus or A. Heughebaert (biodiversity platform).

5 SELNAT: background and framework

The SELNAT-project is more or less a sequel of the ECONET-project, which was done by the same partners. In the ECONET project, the ecological, economical, legal and social aspects that are important for the implementation of ecological networks were investigated. One of the conclusions of the project was that an eco-centric approach seems to be insufficient for a successful implementation. Moreover an integrative approach seems necessary. To halt biodiversity loss and increase the resilience of ecosystems, the EU has been building an ecological network of special protected areas, known as 'Natura 2000'. The question now arises as to how these Natura 2000-sites should be managed in order to operate well, be sustainable and maintain or restore species and habitats in a favourable conservation status. How to realize ecocentric targets in a multifunctionally used landscape, in which different users have equally different nature-images? Or, how to reconcile social-economic and ecological objectives for the chosen areas in order to be (ecologically) sustainable in the long term, as required by the Habitats Directive itself?

Within the framework of the project we want to approach Natura 2000 from a fully integrated perspective taking into account the lessons learned in the ECONET project. The starting hypothesis of the research project is: ***An external approach based on the integration of ecological, economical, legal and social aspects is necessary to design management strategies for large nature areas that will create a favourable conservation status and reach Natura 2000 objectives in a robust way.***

Question of the Follow-up committee: Are there for the moment many projects managed with a solely internal approach? Many nature reserves are, at the moment, managed from an ecocentric approach where the management of nature values is the only point of attention. Moreover they are not always taking into account the major pressures on biodiversity, often coming from outside the reserves. This is more or less logical because the 'power' of the nature organisations, policy people, ... is limited to the reserve of the nature area.

The SELNAT-project aims at

- a) performing a system analysis of the complexity of the implementation of (the goals of) Natura 2000 in the Walloon and Flanders context and reach of discipline-transcendent bottlenecks and
- b) the development of integrated management strategies and test their robustness for a Walloon and a Flemish Natura 2000-site in interaction with a group of local and non-local stakeholders.

In the first work package we start with a broad system analysis of basic concepts, the set-up of an assessment frame and we analyse why the implementation of Natura 2000 goals could be very difficult. The aim of the second work package is to test the assessment frame. For two sites a historical description of the sites, a problem analysis and a development of basic management strategies will be performed. The historical analysis is probably crucial to understand the temporal and spatial framework of (economic and social) development of the site in the past and the current threats to biodiversity. These measures will be evaluated and criticised by local and non-local stakeholders and the Follow-up committee. In the third work package policy recommendations will be formulated.

The different disciplines involved in the project will work closely together during the whole project. In the following paragraphs the highlights for the different disciplines are presented.

Social aspects of biodiversity

The social team aims at the clear definition of social aspects influencing biodiversity at different levels (international, national, local) and at understanding the support and perception of Natura 2000 by the general public and stakeholders. We need to understand how this perception and experience is influenced. By means of literature research, a thesis research and a citizens parliament the social team will get a good impression of the perception of people of biodiversity, Natura 2000 and nature in general. In workpackage 2 an in-depth social analysis of the study areas will be performed. Together with the other teams a management strategy will be developed. This is the basis for the analysis of the social impact of different management strategies for stakeholders (farmers, hunters, recreational users, inhabitants, ...)

Legal aspects of Natura 2000

Starting with the context description of the legal perspective, the legal team will describe the general legal framework, the requirements of de EC legislation, its relationship with Flemish and Walloon legislation and the position of ecosystem approaches for sustainable conservation policy. The COP of the Convention on biological diversity (CBD 1992) will be tested with the ecosystem approach in both selected sites. Last but not least recommendations for sustainable implementation and legal modifications will be formulated.

Question of the Follow up committee: *Will there be any research on the Brussels-Capital Region (French: Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, Nederlands: Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest)? No, the focus is on the local situation and, if relevant, on the comparison of the legal possibilities and constraints for nature conservation between Flanders and Wallonia. However, basic aspects of the implementation of Natura 2000 regulation in Brussels will be incorporated in WP1.*

Economic aspects of biodiversity conservation

Costs and benefits and positive and negative aspects of the implementation of ecological networks such as Natura 2000 will be assessed. Finally, the economic fine-tuning of management measures and implementation of several stakeholders in the management of nature reserves will be assessed.

Questions of the Follow up committee:

- *How will (economic) impact on industrial activities into account be taken into account by the project team? In our Flemish case we have mainly farming activities while the Walloon site*

has a forestry oriented development. In the wider region there are industry-related activities in both case studies.

- *A very interesting case might be the implementation of Natura 2000 in highly industrialised regions like the harbour of Antwerp. Here, there is an extremely high pressure from economical activities and the weight of nature conservation is often too low to combat economical development.*
- *Conclusion is that it would be interesting to estimate the economic impact of the implementation of Natura 2000 in Flanders and Wallonia on the different sectors that are involved. This would be a good output. The economic partner will do an estimation in Workpackage 1.*
- *Moreover It might be very interesting to discover how all different sectors have been involved in the implementation and designation process of Natura 2000. This is a point that will certainly be addressed in Workpackage 1.*

Ecological description of study sites

In Flanders, a part of the valley of the Demer was selected. A relatively similar site was found in Wallonia at the "Bassin de la Lesse entre Villers-sur-Lesse et Chanly".

For this project, a glossary of ecological terms will be composed to allow good communication between all different disciplines. Moreover, bottlenecks will be identified for the implementation and the current delineation of the Natura 2000 network.

Optimal ecological scenarios will be defined for the sites for fine-tuning with strategies of other disciplines. These integrated strategies will be presented to local and non-local stakeholders in an iterative process.

Questions of the Follow up committee: What are the economic activities/threats for biodiversity near or in the Walloon site?

The Walloon site is indeed not highly under pressure of economical development. However, the larger region has some economic importance. Both study sites have a river that brings along a similar dependence on clear water, basin-oriented management, ... Of course, a study site has to be chosen on the basis of availability of data, similarity with other study site, similarity of ecological, social, legal and economical criteria. It is not possible to find two exactly similar sites but we think the differences can be overcome by identification and clear description of these differences.

6 Project outcome

The aim of the project is at developing tools that enable us

- to identify land use types that cause biodiversity degradation
- to evaluate the robustness of biodiversity conservation measures
- to clarify the (dis)advantages of economic evaluation
- to assess the degree of the public support of stakeholders for different management strategies
- to describe the legal complexity (timescale, spatial scale) on Natura 2000

7 Practical arrangements

- All participants of the Follow-up committee will be informed about the progress of the project. They will receive the report of the first meeting and have the opportunity to ask members of the project team for extra information, literature, frameworks for analysis, etc.
- The members of the Follow-up Committee will be asked to come together at least 4 times (2 times in 2007, 2 times in 2008). For these occasions, the SELNAT-project team will prepare input, an agenda and the opportunity to give feedback on the set-up and realisation of the project goals. The tasks of the Follow-up committee during this project can be recapitulated as follows:
 - o Input for methodology

- Input for data/ (site specific) knowledge
- Feedback on reports
- Interaction with people in the field confronted with management conflicts
- Send papers and information for review
- Contact for specific details or reflections on general principles
- Confront with specific paradigms in nature conservation
- Reflecting on scenario development
- In the future, a projectweb will be set-up to allow members of the Committee to easily gain access to papers, literature, presentations and project information. Everybody will be informed when this projectweb is ready to use.
- Possibly, members of our research team might contact you for direct communication and feedback on certain matter.
- When the research team has finished a more detailed planning of the project, it will be sent to the follow-up committee (asap).

8 Contact details

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the members of the SELNAT-project:

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UCL – legal aspects	Marie Mahy <i>marie.mahy@natagora.be</i>
Resource Analysis – social aspects + coordination	Jan Vincke <i>jav@resource.be</i>

MEETING REPORT FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE SELNAT

Project:	SELNAT: HOW TO MAKE NATURA 2000 WORK PROPERLY?			
Subject:	meeting Follow-up Committee SELNAT project			
Meeting date:	11/01/2008			
Place:	Doyen, Louvain-la-Neuve			
Participants:	Aline Van der Werf Olivier Noiret Katty Wouters Els Ameloot Bart Vercoutere Joëlle Huysecom Sophie Salle De Visscher Frédéric Erika Baus Frank Vassen Geert Raeymaekers Research team Marie Mahy Charles-Hubert Born Valérie Grogna Daniel Tyteca Patrick Endels Martin Hermy Gregory Mahy Julien Taymans Jan Vincke Stan Weyns	Belspo Société Royale Forestière Regionaal Landschap Noord-Hageland Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos, Buitendienst Vlaams-Brabant Vrienden van Heverleebos en Meerdaalwoud Natagora Service éco-conseil l'Union wallonne des Entreprises Biodiversity platform Europese Commissie FOD Veiligheid van de voedselketen Université Catholique de Louvain Université Catholique de Louvain Université Catholique de Louvain Université Catholique de Louvain Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Faculté universitaire des Sciences agronomiques de Gembloux Faculté universitaire des Sciences agronomiques de Gembloux Resource Analysis Resource Analysis		
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1 Goal and agenda of the meeting

- *Presentation of Work Package 1*
- *Presentation research approach for Work Package 2*
- *Evaluation instruments and discussion*

2 Presentation WP1 (Julien Taymans, Jan Vincke)

In the first part of the meeting, the results of WP1 are presented to the UC (Users Committee). This is a list of bottlenecks for the different disciplines of the research.

The remarks of the UC on the presentation of the results of WP1 were that the research was very broad, a lot of questions are asked and the link between the disciplines is not clear. The response of the team is that the ECONET-project showed that all different disciplines speak a different language. Until today, it is clear that sociologists have difficulties talking about the same nature as biologists do. So WP1 gave an overview for the other disciplines of the specific problems for the designation and implementation of N2000. Moreover, the knowledge is fragmented in different disciplines and problems need to be shared with each other.

One member of the UC wonders why SELNAT focused in WP1 on problems and bottlenecks and not already on solutions. It was answered that a thorough analysis of the main issues that hamper N2000 implementation must be performed in order to propose adequate solutions to tackle these bottlenecks. This is one of the goals of SELNAT.

Other members of the UC notice that the socio-economic context will always change (climate change etc). So in this project, we should be focusing on this when laying out the objectives for the case study analysis. The Directive gives clear conservation objectives but the main problem is not only the ecological but also the socio-economic time-frame. The implementation remains difficult because the local stakeholders do not understand the logics of N2000.

One aspect that is not enough highlighted according to a member of the UC (Frédéric De Visscher), is the impact of N2000 on the economical context. The economic partners answer that this is something that will have to be developed for the case studies. This remark can be taken as an anticipation of what will be done next. To our knowledge there is no study published yet, or research performed, on the general impact N2000 can have on the economic activities. Some specific impacts in the case of the Walloon Region have been reviewed in the research report.

3 Presentation Work Package 2 (Jan Vincke)

In WP2, we will focus on the bottlenecks that were identified for N2000 and on the solutions proposed in conservation biology literature and by international organizations, within two case studies. The integrated assessment and the Ecosystem Approach (considered as the main framework of implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity) should enable us to assess the “sustainability” and efficiency of actual management instruments and (technical) measures provided by current Natura 2000 legislations and administrative practice. SELNAT will not deliver a new/alternative management plan for these sites, but the planning process will be reviewed in the light of these approaches. Recommendations to integrate ecosystem approach principles into Natura 2000 planning and into the implementation process will be given in WP 3.

Depending on the species or habitat, actions need to be taken immediately or can be postponed to a later stage in the implementation phase. Habitats are changing and sometimes species are closer to extinction than they were the day the site was designated.

3.1. Evaluation of the planning process & adaptive management

As one of the UC members mentions, a lot of time is often wasted during the making of the management plan. Too many people are participating; too many deals are made, and in the end a lot of time is invested in a management plan that cannot be implemented. He argues that there is a correlation between the time and resources spent on making the plan and the chance of failure.

Often, management plans are too detailed and do not leave the choice of the implementation instruments. They should rather focus on clear objectives and only give an overview of the different possible instruments.

Another problem for adaptive management is the way temporary goals and objectives can be assessed. How do we measure them and do we have the scientific knowledge to interpret our results?

Because a management plan should not have a linear approach, an alternative approach should be designed. Some projects start with a lot of talking and exploration, then they start taking actions and along the way, the management plan is made. In this perspective, the management plan is a tool or instrument but not a goal on itself. A management plan is a process and partially an agreement to talk with each other. Some projects demand a result-obligation approach while others do not hold such an obligation. Discussions with stakeholders often have the problem of uncertainty, which is inherent to scientific research. However, people are often afraid of change and uncertainty. Implementation is therefore often very difficult. Moreover, communication and cooperation between administration and local actors is often severely hampered by the 'distance' (be it physically or mentally) between them.

3.2. Evaluation of implementation instruments: effectiveness and acceptance

There was no time left to formally assess the effectiveness and acceptance of the list of implementation instruments distributed by the project team. However, the principle of doing so is clearly supported by most members of the UC. The UC's advice is to assess the effectiveness of these instruments, to support decision making for certain instruments and their bottlenecks, to describe local socio-economic indicators and to talk with people on the site. Today, many people talk with representatives of different organisations but not always with the people on the terrain. The KULeuven explains that there is a thesis going on to assess the valuation and perception of nature and the societal support for nature conservation actions at the lower level of the administration and among stakeholder representatives.

4 Lessons learned by the project team

As to research focus within WP2, the UC insisted on being rather pragmatic and on tackling the following specific aspects (rather than taking a broad approach as we did in WP1):

4.1. Evaluation of management planning & adaptive management

There seems to be a clear need for guidelines on how to adapt management plans within a changing ecological and socio-economic context. This calls for revision of procedures on how to make the actual plan and how to be adaptive in implementing this plan.

4.2. Evaluation of implementation instruments

The UC-members generally approved of our proposal to assess acceptance and effectiveness of several types of instruments but by discussing this we learned that the approach should be somewhat refined and that 'acceptance' should not only be tested among representatives but also with local stakeholders. A few additional environment-related economic instruments will be added to the list of instruments enumerated so far.

5 Contact details

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the members of the SELNAT-project:

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UCL – legal aspects	Marie Mahy marie.mahy@natagora.be
Resource Analysis – social aspects + coordination	Jan Vincke jav@resource.be

MEETING REPORT FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE SELNAT

Project:	SELNAT: HOW TO MAKE NATURA 2000 WORK PROPERLY?		
Subject:	Discussion meeting Follow-up Committee SELNAT project		
Meeting date:	20/04/2007		
Place:	Division Forest, Nature & Landscape, KUL		
Participants:	Didier Vieuxtemps	Fédération Wallonne de l'Agriculture - syndicat	
	Katty Wouters	Regionaal Landschap Noord-Hageland	
	Els Ameloot	Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos, Buitendienst Vlaams-Brabant	
	Bart Vercoutere	Vrienden van Heverleebos en Meerdaalwoud	
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	Marie Mahy	Université Catholique de Louvain	
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	Steve Meuris	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	
	Martin Hermey	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	
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	Jan Vincke	Resource Analysis	
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1 Goal and agenda of the meeting

At the last user meeting in Louvain-La-Neuve was decided to assess the feasibility and effectiveness in relation to Natura 2000 of different existing instruments. A websurvey was conducted among the users. Goal of this meeting was to discuss within the follow-up committee the results of the survey.

First the research team presented a small introduction and the results of the survey. The second part of the meeting was used to discuss the results of the survey.

2 Introduction (J. Taeymans)

J. Taeymans presented the context and goal of the meeting and the way the different instruments were selected by the research team. The powerpoint-file of this presentation is attached to this meeting report.

Questions from the users in relation to the presentation:

- What is exactly Species protection plan?
Species Protection Plan is as an instrument developed in the Netherlands. It's translated to the Flemish situation. In practice it seems difficult to apply it. These species protection plans are very optimistically formulated on the slide but it might develop in that way.
- Contrat de rivière exist also in Flanders.
There is an instrument that isn't the same thing but overlapping. In Flanders we call it a 'Bekkenbeheerplan' as a coordination instrument for water management. The bekkenbeheerplan itself has no money to implement measures.
- Organic farming subsidies: What does it cover? Only the subsidies for organic farming? This seems not specific for Natura 2000?
True, the goals of Natura 2000 aren't the primal purpose. The purpose of this survey is to analyze all kinds of instruments that could contribute to a certain environmental purpose.

3 Discussion on instruments

J. Vincke gives a small presentation of the most important results of the inquiry. The powerpoint-file of this presentation is attached to this meeting report. First of all the users were asked for a global response. Afterwards the results for the different instruments were discussed.

General points of attention from the users were:

- Most of the people who answered were mainly naturalist. To have a better view of the perception of other groups, a broader survey is needed.
- Generally there is not a large difference in feasibility/effectiveness between the instruments. Most of the instruments are at the upper side of feasibility and effectiveness.
Correct but an important aspect is that the sample is too small.
If nature is THE objective then Natural reserves, Land Purchase and Life Natura seems to be the most interesting.
- The definitions of feasibility/effectiveness different for everybody? In analysis the results this has to be taken into account.
- 'Natuurprojectovereenkomst' does it exist in the Walloon area? It's surprising that everybody finds this instrument feasible and effective while there isn't any experience.

Points of attention **Land purchase vs. expropriation**

In the results the feasibility of the instruments land purchase vs. expropriation is strongly different. Technical and budgetary this seems just the same measures for a user. Differences in feasibility must be explained by the sociologic acceptance. The legal framework is the only difference (with emphasis on power by the government). Not everybody agrees with this statement. The budget does differ! When we do expropriation it's more expensive for the authorities: the prices are higher and moreover, most of the time you have to pass by court. Agreed is that in the case of expropriation we have to add the management cost at the start. Afterwards the budget will be the same for the nature management. For the reason a user stated that the financial impacts of the two instruments are globally (at regional level) the same.

In practice land purchase for nature is most of the time a case of opportunities. It's on a free basis. Expropriation is not (often) used for nature conservation goals. The government tries to minimize

(not only for nature) the use of this instrument. On the other hand users know cases where people are happy to receive money. It's cost a lot for the government, especially on the short term! It's more difficult if it's an expropriation of a house or a good agricultural land. Then you have more severe protest. Expropriations in these cases are mainly done for infrastructural works and inundations areas.

The low feasibility for expropriation in this survey is maybe more based on the knowledge of people regarding expropriation for infrastructure than on the knowledge of people regarding expropriation for nature. It's not well known for a purpose of nature.

Points of attention in relation to the instruments 'Nature reserves' – Life Nature – Land purchase

A researcher is surprised by the 'ranking' as feasible of the nature reserves. In the survey it seems to be rated quite feasible, while in practice for instance farmers have a strong opposition. People want that N2000 zones are different than natural reserve. A possible answer is certainly that most of the respondents were nature people. Almost every body agreed that foresters and farmers aren't interested in nature reserves on their ground. Another researcher stated that the incorporation of more people in nature reserves might counter the opposition.

Instruments that have the same feasibility have quite the same characteristics (Nature reserves, Life Nature, purchase). To implement a nature reserve you purchase the ground. You then have the time to manage the area. Live Nature is an instrument to accelerate the process of purchasing and development measures. Important is that the main objective of those instruments is nature. Besides that nature minded persons (organizations, government) own the land. They have then the power/right to develop it.

A nature conservation user states that nature reserves are: *more protected by law and therefore the chance on success is larger*. Sometimes, people are afraid of reserves (invasions by thistle, etc...). An important aspect for the users is that you can exclude people, other activities. A user agreed: the greatest chance to reach nature conservation goals are indeed nature reserves because the management here is a long term case, in contrast with for example AEM. In this case farmers can stop whenever they want with the nature management.

In the Flemish region there are forest owners that want reach the same targets as in nature reserves. Do foresters in the Walloon part find nature reserves a punishment?? (question of user) Yes they find it a punishment to create natural reserves, to make nature conservation. In the Flemish region it's maybe different because of the different possibilities for financial compensation. Would a forester do efforts for nature if he is paid?

A Walloon forest user explains that it depends on the proportion: 3% of "îlots de sénescence" could be okay but 10% is too much for economical aspects. It's also a question of liberty of choice, a psychological aspect. About hunting: you need 50 ha to rent the land for hunting and not everybody is in this case. Reserves seem effective to reach the objectives of Natura 2000 but they aren't feasible because it is mono-functional whereas we are waiting for a forest that is multifunctional. A nature reserve, like management today, doesn't create money. It consumes money. In a nature reserve there is, for the moment, a constant input of money needed. It's not durable in an economic way. A forest has to produce/generate my salary. When the forest doesn't create money I'm not paid. In natural reserves forests doesn't produce. A forest has to create money, not consume money.

First function of the private forest in Wallonia: it's an inheritance/patrimony that you receive and transmit after. There is also a sentimental value. So the private forest in Wallonia has two important aspects, first: the technical management aspect, and second: the family relationship aspect (sentiment). There can be some technical problems and familial relation problems. Putting in a natural reserve in a forest is not only an economic loss, but also a loss of liberty and feeling of property, as the familial choice is restricted. It must be the choice of the owner. ("option value" of a

field). A Flemish user states that this feeling is the same in the Flemish Region. But it stands not only for forest(ers). Patrimonial sentiments aren't restricted to certain land use. Also in nature reserves you can sentimental feelings. Indeed, but ... important stays for everybody the freedom of choice. It's possible to reconcile sentimental value and nature protection. Important to know how we will realize N2000 objectives in a forest management plan. A solution could be to leave the choice about the designation of ecological zones in the FMP to the owner. Nature reserves are one way for N2000, forest plans form another way.

At the moment, the strategy of the government is not of any good systematic procedure: they have zones where they follow a land purchase policy, and zones where they follow a stimulation policy of land owners. More or less the development of nature reserves is a case of opportunity. A good strategy is to begin with a small part. ('You grown at the tempo of the land owners around you'). You gain respect. In the beginning you are 'stupid'. After a while say that they can use the nature reserve (for instance for cattle breeding), that they can collaborate,... When you are accepted by the local community you can start to try to grow. Once you have taken an opportunity and establish a nature reserve more opportunities to purchase land arise. Owners of land have to see the opportunities, they have to learn, ...In this way nature reserves are very feasible. The only treat is that nature reserves can have an impact on the surrounding lands.

We cannot say that forest is only production. The forest is multifunctional by law. There this is no freedom of choice (according to a user). In practice there is a gradient in forest owners (nature minded – economic minded owners). For the people who really want to live from the forest, multifunctionality is not wanted. In Flanders, FMP and deduction of succession rights are coupled. This is very effective. Large land owners are now actively buying forests in Natura 2000 to benefit of this fiscal advantage. Nature management in forests seems to be less negative in Flanders than in Wallonia. There are within the (forest)property always some areas that can be used to reach nature targets (e.g. ponds, lanes, ...).

If you don't have to manage forests it's okay, but if you have to manage to support one special species, it costs. Compensations of this cost could be done by subsidies. Even if the bill at the end is kif kif this doesn't feel sentimental the same for a forest user. Moreover he find that subsidies aren't durable, there is a constant uncertainty involved, linked with the length of the legislature. The actual government doesn't engage him for the next government.

A researcher state that integrated reserves could cost nothing. Studies in the Netherlands demonstrate that estates, land have more value if they are next to natural reserve. There are also other important revenues possible (e.g. Park Hoge Kempen). So the costs can turn out very different when calculating this in the cost-benefit analysis. A possibility is maybe also the establishment a regime of visitors payback.

Nature reserves most of the time cost money. That is for a nature user clear. The government is committed to the legislation. Question is how to reach the target in the best way (private subsidies or nature reserves). The subsidies are a European case, it's not a case of national policy. It is stated that the tools provided by the Programme de Développement Rural wallon should be better used in the scope of Natura 2000 for forests.

The success of Life Nature projects is very dependable on the integration of local stakeholders. If they are involved the project doesn't end at the end of the Life Nature project. On the other hand it also varies with the kind of project. Not all Life Nature projects purchase land. Then it's probably even more difficult to reach really durable results. A users state that when people know that when a Life Nature project is going on they can higher there prices.

Points of attention **in relation to the instruments EIA, Protection Regime and Permits.**

The instrument EIA is highly effective to prevent damage if the government uses it's strategic. Like in the port of Antwerp it plays a crucial role. Good instrument to help to manage land use in and

around N2000 site and to avoid human impact. An extra is the compensation duty. We have to distinguish between appropriate assessment and EIA. In Wallonia: for every permit you need an EIA (in some case, it's only a "notice" (NEP)), not in Flanders. Here the EIA, can be understood differently. EIA could be interpreted in different ways. For every permit you need for instance a minimal environmental impact analysis. In Flanders, assessment if it's in N2000 but if it's at 2 or 3 km, an assessment is not always needed. An EIA is not the same as an appropriate assessment (*passende beoordeling*)! An EIA also goes beyond nature areas.

The private forests in Wallonia do not have an EIA. Not so much in forest: in forest, not a lot of acts submitted to permit. Not a lot of permits in agricultural zones too \leftrightarrow a lot in conditionality. For permits and FMP, often the distance between administration/plan and the field/practices makes that the results are not the one that are expected. Control and things like that are very important.

A weak point for the EIA in Belgium is that EIA is not tuned on protected species in contrast with for example France. Most of times, impacts on protected species are not taken into account when delivering a permit.

Points of attention in relation of **Communication and education**:

What about effectiveness? It works on the long term. It depends for the users a lot on:

- ...how the campaign is organized
- ...whether people want to listen
- ...the long term implementation of education and communication (week van het bos)
- ...more effective if linked to a concrete project, actions, ...it might increase the awareness
- ...

Communication is most often in a direct effective.

Points of attention in relation of **voluntary instruments like AEM, labels, organic farming,...**

Voluntary instruments can be effective if it goes hand in hand with information programs according to a forest user. It depends on the kind of information and on the kind of program. Forest owners for example did not join in Wallonia voluntary programs that were developed, but they did in certain regions of France.

Another user believes that the effectiveness is generally low, but important because they give to people the feeling \rightarrow good for long term. They can be used for the stepping stones between low value and high value nature conservation areas. Another users agrees that it's a good tool on the long term. It's based on the belief of the users that they can contribute to the nature goals. In the long time this is more durable than regulations (according to this user).

For a researcher voluntary instrument are maybe also good instruments to try something (as a user? Or as a government) \rightarrow if it does not work, stop the initiative, if it does, people can go on. On user is clear: Voluntary tools are good to make people aware of nature (to get knowledge about nature management), but not sufficient to reach the objectives and not really cost-effective.

Farmers can stop AEM when they want. For grassland, the species diversity is smaller than in nature reserves but larger than in intensive agricultural landscapes. In the Flemish region AEM is very popular. The different AEM measures vary quite a bit in effectiveness. For instance, efforts for landscape elements could be very effective. Efforts in the arable land could be less effective.

Results could be better when there is a contract. What is better, pay for the results or pay for the efforts? In the Netherlands, farmers take compensation type instead of the result-oriented reward. In Flanders the botanic AEM has a partly result-oriented payment

AEM = context different in Flanders than in Wallonia. There is more success in Wallonia (50% of farmers involved. But be careful to statistics. When the farmer applies a measure, he goes in the ranking of statistics.). About the surface of AEM, little is known. Gap: we pay without necessary expecting results. A proposition for Wallonia, to better valorize the work of farmers, should be to pay a contractual amount and a bonus depending on results for nature. Sometimes, in Flanders, farmers are paid only if there are some concrete results on the field.

AEM is a tool that could be efficient but it lost importance today because of:

- Administrative reason: very strict, there are a lot of papers, not encouraging the system.
- Economical context evolves: some measures are financially a failure (increase of cereals value)
- Some measures are not well prepared. Ex: MAE 9 (arranged band), not tested before the program was launched, that do a bad publicity. This is a general point of concern.
- Resistance in the administration to change mentalities (nature instead of production)
- Discordance between administrations (agricultural administration vs AEM administration)

A researcher proposes that a final recommendation of the SELNAT project should be to better adapt AEM in a nature conservation scope: change the design and take the spatial context into account, at the moment there is no overview. A user thinks that it should be better if AEM were thought on a multi exploitation scale. At the moment measures were only taken on the marginal farming lands. A network of patches is not developed. In Flanders farm-planners aid (group of farmers in the entire region to come to landscape broad measures. One of the main problems is to integrate the rotation system of farming, to change agricultural habits of working, the 'pacht', A general approach for whole the region is not effective. You have to implement measures case/region by case/region.

The potential impact of an instrument like labels on the other is not very high. Not conceivable in Natura 2000. In the first place, it is not the first problem now. It's try out with the "Boeuf des prairies gaumaises" but it doesn't work. An important aspect for this instrument is that you need people who want to pay more for 'natural' products. A user argued that the knowledge of this instrument is rather low. In general people don't want to give money so therefore little potential. This could be the explanation to the low effectiveness of this instrument. At the moment, there are some experiments with labels in the Netherlands.

Other instruments

Other instruments that were mentioned during the discussion: :

- include destination plan (plan de secteur). Because this is the most traditional and well known instrument.
- natural reserves with visitor payback
- National parks (like Hoge Venen) can include some N2000 sites. Strong points: large area, integrated management/goals is possible, you have a product that can sell (possibility to develop the HORECA)
- Conservation groups. A group of non-nature users that have grouped and work together on nature management. At the moment they work only advising in Wallonia. In Flanders you have the instrument of bosgroepen. Like Nature reserves it is slowly, organic growing. You build up trust.
- Sylvo-environmental measures are not sufficiently applied in Wallonia

Conclusion

Lot of instruments so why this perception that Natura 2000 doesn't work properly? Is this correct? The implementation of Natura 2000 needs to start. We are only at the beginning. Possible reasons why Natura 2000 might not work:

- Because of the lack of clear targets
- because of the lack of constraints
- because of the lack of financial means.
- often, there are too many overlapping authorizations for one region, and the overview on responsibilities and hierarchy is lost.

We need a broader survey to enlarge the insight in the effectiveness and feasibility of the different instruments. At the moment the representativeness is too low.

The perception of respondents can change with different definitions of feasibility and effectiveness. For instance, the perception can change if we have an unlimited budget; when we take into account socio economic circumstances, ... The discussion on the definition is for this reason very important.

The research team will extend the survey to a broader public (representatives of nature organizations, landowners, foresters, ...). Afterwards we want to test our knowledge at a local level in the two pilot areas.

MEETING REPORT

Project: SELNAT: HOW TO MAKE NATURA 2000 WORK PROPERLY?

Subject: Meeting with users

Meeting date: 05-02-09

Place: Leuven

Participants: Simon de Voghel (Naturawal)
Olivier Noiret (NTF)
Simon-Pierre Dumont (NTF)
Johan Toebat (ANB)
Didier Vieuxtemps (FWA)
Frédéric De Visscher (UWE)

Gregory Mahy (FUSUGx, ecological team)
Julien Taymans (FUSUGx, ecological team)
Martin Hermy (KULeuven, ecological team)
Steve Meuris (KULeuven, ecological team)
Daniel Tyteca (UCL, economic team)
Valérie Grogna (UCL, economic team)
Mary Mahy (UCL, legal team)
Stan Weyns (Resource Analysis, coordinator)
Jan Vincke (Resource Analysis, coordinator)

Not present:
Katty Wouters (RL)
Charles-Hubert Born (UCL, legal team)

Distribution: Project team and users

Reporters: Stan Weyns

Document reference:

Date report: 06-02-09

Version number: 1

Minutes of meeting:

Presentation

Introduction on the project by Jan Vincke

Description of assessment of instruments by Marie Mahy

Description of results of websurvey in Flanders and Wallonia at administrations and expert level on instruments for Natura 2000

Description of results of interviews with Users of Natura 2000 in Wallonia by Valérie Grogna

Description of results of websurvey on alternative strategies for Natura 2000 in Flanders by Stan Weyns

Overview of main recommendations from the research project by Julien Taymans.

Discussion

- what about the recommendations and conclusions for the surveys? They were not presented in the presentation.
 - The research team admits that a profound link between the recommendations and the actual research results is missing. The main recommendations are identified on the basis of literature review and bottlenecks for Natura 2000 (WP1)
 - This will be adjusted in the final report and more concrete recommendations will be formulated from the survey results
- What is the conclusion from the different definitions of effectiveness and feasibility of instruments? How to interpret this?
 - The results did not exactly correspond with our expectations. We thought our respondents would give a better ranking themselves but this didn't happen. Afterwards, we have to recognise it would have been better to let them rank the main important aspects from their point of view. Our respondents were experts and people from administration in this survey. It is clear they consider very different aspects as important and they should recognise in public consultation and debates that actual users of nature sites can have different perspectives on their appreciation of instruments.
 - A recommendation on this will be added to the report.
- What is the cost of the different strategies?
 - There was no cost assessment in this research on the different strategies because we didn't describe the actual content of alternative strategies. The information is very difficult to find and difficult to assess. Moreover, the focus of the project was mainly on social acceptance of instruments and strategies. An economic assessment would have asked a different focus. The team however recognises that the economic cost is an important aspect.
 - Some recommendations will be formulated in the report on this aspect.
- What do you conclude from the research that Flanders can learn from Wallonia and the other way around?
 - We have seen differences in the instrument assessment of Flanders and wallonia. However, the respondent group was rather unsimilar and conclusions are difficult to make. On the second survey, a different methodology was used (interviews versus websurvey) so comparison is even more difficult
 - Some recommendations for Flanders and Wallonia on instruments will be made in the final report.
- Do you think it is realistic to have the government choose what consultant executes the EIA as proposed in the recommendations?
 - There are important considerations to take on EIA reporting. Cost, availability of certified experts, ... it is nearly impossible to change the liberal system of choosing the company that makes the EIA. However, it is considered that some companies have an interest in a positive analysis in the EIA. So, on the basis of what criteria can you choose the consultant that gets the contract? How to make this system work is not clear but the system is not perfect as it is.
 -
- voluntary instruments and processes seem very interesting for future instruments and nature conservation as being feasible and mostly relatively effective. For example the instrument Natuurinrichting seems to have some good results in Flanders. So, as we have seen very emotional (negative and positive) reactions on the issue of nature conservation, the voluntary aspect of instrument might increase the social acceptance and thus increase the likelihood of success. Clearly the age of users plays a role in this acceptance process. Moreover, the knowledge about an instrument increases the appreciation of an instrument. Therefore, communication about the instruments seems very important in the process of implementation.