FUNDS PROVIDED FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF NATURE AND THE LANDSCAPE
Title of the audit No. 16/10:

Funds provided for the improvement of nature and the landscape

- Type of audit: **Compliance**
- Year of publication: **2016**
- Audited period: **2013 – 2015**
- Follows up the audit No. 10/12
The aim/ focus of the audit

✔ To scrutinise the provision, drawdown, and spending of funds earmarked for the nature and landscape protection.

✔ Did the funds for the nature and landscape protection bring the expected results?

✔ Did the MoE observe and assess the effectiveness of the programmes in relation to the desired change?
Audited bodies:

- Ministry of the Environment (MoE) - managing authority and the administrator
- State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic
- Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic
- Municipalities, towns, cities
- Civic associations, nature protection associations, public benefit organizations
- Private persons
Funds for the nature and landscape protection

EU resources
309 mil. EUR (+ 20 mil EUR from the state budget)

the state budget – national subsidy programmes
24 mil. EUR
National subsidy programmes

Investment programme:
Landscape Natural Function Restoration

Non-investment programme:
Landscape Management Programme

- Support from the state budget
- Subsidy of up to 100% of total costs
- Tools for securing conservation objectives that cannot be guaranteed from EU sources
Landscape Natural Function Restoration Programme

☑ Purpose: to support investment and non-investment plans implementing adaptation measures mitigating the impact of climate change on:

• aquatic,
• forest, and
• non-forest ecosystems.

☑ 2009 - 2018
Landscape Management Programme

- Objective: to implement measures to maintain and increase biodiversity and land use ensuring protection of the natural and cultural values of the landscape
- First announced in 1996
We scrutinized ...

40

+  

20

Suported by the national subsidy programmes

60 projects

(31 mil. EUR)
Findings

✅ Quantifiable and measurable objectives for the subsidy programmes were not set.

✅ Operational sub-objectives were set under the Priority Axis 6 of the OPE 2007-2013 without stipulation of initial and target values, e.g. Strengthening the population of endangered species of plants and animals, strengthening biodiversity, improving natural conditions in forests ...

✅ There were not indicated initial and target values

✅ Without quantifiable and verifiable objectives the MoE could not assess the success of the programme

✅ Achievement of the subsidy programmes indicator sufficiently assessed.
Findings

The audit examined whether the results attained through the subsidy awarded under the audited subsidy programmes corresponded to the stipulated expected target values of the indicators.

The following values of the basic assessment indicators were reached through the subsidy provided under the Priority Axis 6 of the OPE 2007-2013:

- Revitalised area: **214 km²** (expected target value: **10 km²**)
- Number of projects for the restoration of a stable landscape water regime and the restoration of ecological stability elements: **890** (expected target value: **15**)
- Number of implemented projects aimed at improving the state of nature and the landscape: **2213** (expected target value: **150**)
Findings (the national programmes)

- Some indicators have been exceeded multiple times, whereas no projects have been undertaken in the case of others:
  - For the indicator „forested area with improved species, age, and space structure“ or „area cleared of wood“, 43 projects were supported on **653 ha** (expected target value: **8 500 ha**)
  - **No** projects were carried out under the „number of recovery programmes“ indicator (expected target value: **8**)
  - **No** projects were carried out under the „number of eliminated migration barriers on watercourses“ indicator (expected target value: **27**)


Findings

The state of nature and the landscape did not show positive development.

- The total area of agricultural land in the Czech Republic is decreasing. Between 2000 and 2014, more than 64 thousand acres of agricultural land was lost (1 % of the total area of the Czech Republic).
- At this time, 63.6 % of agricultural land remains potentially threatened by water erosion (18 % by wind erosion).
- The adverse state of water courses persists.
- ....
Findings in relation to the subsidy beneficiaries

- 60 projects
- EUR 31 million
- Individual projects did not contain specifically quantified benefits in relation to the desired change of the state of nature and landscape
Final assessment and recommendations

State Environmental Policy objectives:
• Stopping diminishing biodiversity
• Stopping decreasing ecological stability

Recommendations:
• Setting quantified and measurable programme objectives
• Setting verifiable indicators
• Setting parameters that allow determination of benefit
• Monitoring and assessing continually the achievement
• Assessing the subsidy awarded under the programmes
ECA audit

Similar shortcomings were discovered and similar conclusions were reached by the ECA audit:

Thank you for your attention

Jana Pechová | jana.pechova@nku.cz