



Natura 2000 network implementation parallel audit

June 2008 report



Presentation

- **Audit scope and methodology**
- **Findings relating to compliance; reasons for delays**
- **Findings pertaining to governance**
- **Funding and cost efficiency issues**
- **Conclusion on impacts**



Natura 2000 Habitats and Birds directives

- **Theme: implementation of the Natura 2000 network in Europe**
- **A parallel performance audit**
- **Decided at the Eurosai WGEA seminar, 2005**
- **7 SAs, Austria, Czech Rep., Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, UK**
- **Coordinated by Cour des comptes, France**
- **With technical assistance of ECA**

Audit scope and methodology

- **The scope of the audit : whether and how the provisions of the European directives were observed in an effective and efficient way**
- **Audit of an European policy vs/ audit of the implementation of an European policy**
- **Common guidelines but no control over audit results**
- **Discussion of audit findings at national level**

Main findings relating to compliance

- **Identification of main problems in transposing and complying**
- **Most of audited countries not able to implement within defined timescale**
- **Numerous infringement processes (France, 7 pertaining to Habitats; Austria 3)**

Origin of delays

- Failure to estimate the magnitude of resources (financial , human, scientific knowledge, data)
- Information, consultation and negotiation with landowners, farmers, forest managers, hunters, nature protection NGOs, local authorities
- Management of complaints: 13 500 in Finland and 1 600 appeals to Supreme Admin. Court
- Delays for full compliance: 20 years in France, 7 Y. + in Finland;
- No full compliance (date of audit): Estonia, Czech Rep.

Findings relating to governance

- Directives allow for diversity: Positive
- Most countries: Preference for Contract
- Frequent split of responsibility between Agriculture and Envir. Ministries: issues in France, Austria, Finland, Hungary
- Conflicts with local governments: France
- Role of nature conserv. NGOs in surveillance
- Attention to be paid by Envir. Department to communication and public participation

Funding and cost efficiency(1)

- Audits not able to identify costs of implementation: Only partialy. No transaction costs (national/local levels) ?
Finland estimated administrative cost: 3,5 €/ha
- Opportunity costs ?
- Frequent cofinancing; use of agro environmental measures
- Lack of indicators; France: average cost / contract: 25/30 000 €.

Funding and cost efficiency (2)

- No proper evaluation of cost efficiency and effectiveness
- Comparison of cost of conservation method in Finland: If land is acquired, cost > 400 mi than cost of implementing Natura 2000



Conclusion: Impacts of Natura 2000 implementation

- **On conservation ? More land, more stability + flexibility**
- **On conservation methods ? Knowledge improvements; impact assessment: infancy**
- **On conservation administration? Developpement of communication and negociation skills**