Designation of the Natura 2000 network in the Czech Republic

All the preparation of the Natura 2000 was carried out by the Ministry of the Environment (ME). In 1999 the ME authorized the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of the Czech Republic (ANCLP CR) to prepare scientific data.

Special Protection Areas

The professional preparation of the proposed list of Special Protection Areas was coordinated under a supervision of the ANCLP CR by the Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO, Czech partner of BirdLife International). The designation criteria were formed by the specification of criteria for the designation of Important Bird Areas - IBAs in the European Union. Five sites were proposed for every bird species mentioned in Annex I of the Bird Directive and for migrating birds regularly occurring. Three pairs was the minimal number for big bird species, six pairs for middle and small species of non-songbirds and twelve pairs for songbirds. A resting site hosting at least 1% of a migrating population of migrating species and a regular resting site of at least 20,000 waterfowl of one or more species are other criteria that were used for site selection. Sites for species with numerous populations (e.g. collared flycatcher, black woodpecker, red-backed shrike) were proposed only in case at least one other Annex I species fulfilled the criteria as well.

The revised proposal of Special Protection Areas was negotiated with regional authorities, municipalities, owners, stakeholders and other ministries. From September to December 2004 the government ratified it over several sittings. A governmental degree was proposed for every Special Protection Area. The government has approved 38 Special Protection Areas. 41 sites were mentioned in a former proposal, but the Heřmanův stav - Odra - Poolzí Special Protection Area was not approved and the decision about other two sites Dehtář and Českobudějovické rybníky Fishponds was postponed.

Sites of Community Importance

The Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of the Czech Republic has guaranteed the preparation of a professional proposal of Sites of Community Importance since 1999. Data about the distribution and abundance of animal and plant species and natural habitat qualities were gathered before a proposal of Sites of Community Importance was prepared. The process of site selection was different for natural habitats, animals, and vascular and non-vascular plants. The approach in each group, from data gathering through evaluation to the final proposal of Sites of Community Importance is shown by the diagram below. The Czech Republic extends to the Continental and Panonian biogeographical regions, so the proposals were produced separately for each region.
In order to develop existing data about the distribution and particularly about the abundance of animal and plant species, detailed field mapping was carried out to improve current quantitative and qualitative data.

The detailed and context mapping of biotopes, as more detailed units of natural habitats, was performed according to the Catalogue of Biotopes published for the whole country in 2001 - 2004. The aim of the detailed mapping was to get detailed information about the area and quality of biotopes, like types of natural habitats. The results of the context mapping served to get a broad view of the total area of natural habitats occurring in the Czech Republic.

Applying the results of biotope mapping, the digital layer was processed to serve for proposing so-called natural complexes. The process of designation of natural complexes was subject of peer-review. The Sites of Community Importance have been chosen from a collection of natural complexes for all types of natural habitat.

Site unification of all four types (species of non-vascular and vascular plants, animals and types of natural habitats) resulted in a final professional proposal of the ANCLP CR, which contained 905 sites. Negotiation with owners, users, municipalities and other important stakeholders was carried out for all the sites. The results of the negotiations were included in a elaborated proposal with a total number of 883 sites. A so-called national list with 863 Sites of Community Importance was the outcome of difficult negotiations with other ministeries and district authorities. The national list of 863 Sites of Community Importance was ratified by the Decree No. 132/2005 and was presented to the European Commission in February 2005.
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- Council Directive 92/43/EHS on habitats
  - April 2004
  - Professional proposal of a national list of Sites of Community Importance
    - Negotiation with owners and stakeholders
  - April - June 2004
  - Ratification of a national list by the government of the Czech Republic – 22.12.2004
  - Presentation of a national list of Sites of Community Importance to the EC – 8.2.2005
    - 3 years after
  - Ratification of the European list – the Council EU
    - within 6 years after - negotiation with owners and other stakeholders
  - Agreement or designation of Sites of Community Importance – nature conservation authorities

  - October 2003
  - Proposal of a national list of Special Protection Areas
  - Negotiation with owners and stakeholders - 2003
  - Consecutive ratification of individual decrees of Special Protection Areas – September - December 2004
  - Notification about the designation of Special Protection Areas to the EU - December 2004
The European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD) in Paris evaluates national lists in terms of completeness and formal and factual accuracy after they are presented to the European Commission. The European Commission together with ETC/BD organizes for each biogeographical region a biogeographical seminar, where representatives of states, professionals and non-governmental organizations discuss the sufficiency of the number of pSCI for every species and natural habitats. In case the European Commission considers a list not sufficient, it requests the country to add or revise its national list. The whole process ends when a European list of Sites is published in the Official Journal of the European Communities. When the Council of the EU approves the European list, every member state must designate the sites as protected areas (or secure another kind of protection).

The Ministry of the Environment publishes the sites contained in the European List in the national statutes. Nature conservation authorities are granted up to six years to designate the sites as protected areas or secure their protection by agreements. District Councils, Ministry of the Environment and authorities in the Military Training Areas will be responsible for designating new protected areas.