

**DARWIN INITIATIVE FOR THE SURVIVAL OF SPECIES:  
APPLICATION FOR GRANT FOR ROUND 9 COMPETITION**

Please read the accompanying Guidance Note before completing this form. Give a full answer to each section; applications will be considered on the basis of information submitted on this form. Applicants are asked not to use the form supplied to cross refer to information in separate documents except where this is invited on the form. The space provided indicates the level of detail required but you may provide additional information on a separate sheet if necessary. Copies of this form are available on disk or by e-mail on request. You are asked also to complete the summary sheet attached at the end of this form. Although you may reproduce this sheet in a reasonable font, you should not expand it beyond an A4 sheet (leaving the allocated space for DETR comments to be made) as additional information will not be taken into account.

1. Name and address of organisation

<b><i>EUROSITE, PROGRAMME &amp; DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, POSTBUS 1366, 5004 BJ TILBURG, NETHERLANDS</i></b>
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2. Principals in project - See also attached sheet

Details	Project leader	Other UK personnel (if working more than 50% on project)	Main project partner or co-ordinator in host country
Surname	Idle	See attached sheet	See attached sheet
Forename(s)	Edward Thomas	"	"
Post held	President	"	"
Institution (if different to the above)	<i>EUROSITE</i>	"	"
Department		"	"
Telephone		"	"
Fax		"	"
Email		"	"

Please provide a one page CV for each of these named individuals.

3. Project title (not exceeding 10 words)

<b>BUILDING CAPACITY IN WETLANDS BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION.</b>
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4. Abstract of study (in no more than 750 characters)

The project seeks to achieve advances in wetland biodiversity conservation in Central European & Baltic States, through management planning, stakeholder management, communication and recording & monitoring programmes. The project will be integrated closely with the policy and science environments of participating countries. It will concentrate on solving practical issues. It will ensure that experience accrued is applied to others in the participating countries. The focus is the practical application of the information, experience and techniques of UK partners.

The project is phased over 3 years; Year 1: *Management planning*; Year 2: *Stakeholder management: Communicating management plans*; Year 3: *Monitoring and maintaining links with managers of similar sites in Europe*.

A consortium of staff from the principal UK nature conservation organisations will deliver the programme. It will be co-ordinated and administered by the UK secondee to *EUROSITE*, the network of nature conservation managers in Europe. The recipients will be Government and non-Government staff from target countries.

5. Timing. Give the proposed starting date and duration of the project.

1<sup>st</sup> April 2001 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004

6. Describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of your organisation. (Please note that this should describe your unit, institute or department within a university.)

**Aims**

*EUROSITE* is the network of organisations and managers involved with the management of the natural biodiversity heritage of Europe. The network is actively committed to providing a forum for bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation between nature conservation managers so that good practice in land and water management can be shared around Europe in a pragmatic, convivial and efficient way. *EUROSITE* promotes its aim through a series of programmes:

**Activities**

- **Twinning** of similar sites for the benefit of their managers and local communities, This involves sharing knowledge & experience between managers of similar sites e.g. the Somerset Levels in the UK & Marais de Cotentin in Normandy, France.
- Organisation of **Workshops** where managers can consider common issues and problems such as species introductions, management planning, project management, monitoring & recording and management of habitats such as grasslands, peatbogs and heathlands.
- Provision of **Guidance and Helplines** related to management issues
- A developing **electronic information exchange programme** as a supplement to real meetings, which provides access to discussion groups on habitat management, species management and management planning, each dealing with topics of current interest to site managers. A virtual library of conservation references is being built up, and there is access to services such as the database of natural site management in Europe.
- **Communication programme.** *EUROSITE* needs to inform its network and its partners about its activities and operates an active communication programme to achieve this. It consists of a 4-monthly newsletter, a special page in each issue of the English Nature quarterly management publication *enact*, reports from each of its 10 to 12 yearly workshops, a monthly email newsletter and a twice yearly newsletter for CEEC contacts. Every 2 years, *EUROSITE* holds an Award ceremony to reward good

practice in nature conservation.

- **Special Projects Programme.** Partnerships between members with a common interest are encouraged through 'Special Projects'. For example, the transfer of information between managers of Ramsar sites along the European Atlantic Coast, deltas and inland seas takes place through the **Water and wetlands** group funded by Evian and supported by the Ramsar Bureau. **Working Groups** - such as *Management Planning, Grazing/ grasslands* (Eurograzer) and the *Spoonbill group*, which focuses on coastal management on natural sites along the western flyway of the Spoonbill are very active.
- **Central and Eastern Europe Programme** - A strategic analysis of needs in the region by *EUROSITE* has helped develop a coherent programme of action with key nature conservation organisations. Capacity building projects have been undertaken. **EECONET Action Fund** - *EUROSITE*, Euronature and EUCC, have created the fund, for emergency action to preserve vital elements of the European Ecological Network through acquisition, restoration and management.

*EUROSITE* is now recognised as a major member of the European nature conservation community and has built up a strong information base of the most promising organisations and people in Central Europe and the Baltic States. It is very experienced in organising exchange activities, particularly workshops. *EUROSITE* deals with about 10 to 12 each year. All the major nature conservation organisations in UK are members of the *EUROSITE* network.

#### **Achievements**

After its launch in Rochefort-sur-Mer, France, in 1987, *EUROSITE* now has over 70 organisational members in 15 European countries, including both Governmental Agencies and NGOs, both large and small. It has succeeded in assisting many network members with management of habitats and species, and has given confidence and credibility to managers, particularly in Central & Eastern Europe, but also throughout Europe.

*EUROSITE* is recognised by the Environment Directorate of the European Commission as a successful and exemplary network, and is regularly invited to take part in consultations with key players in the biodiversity/sustainability field such as IUCN and the World Bank.

*EUROSITE's* success has been partly due to its clear focus on its site management niche, non-bureaucratic handling of workshops and its build-up of knowledge and information about the most promising and likely people in the field of nature conservation in Central & Eastern Europe. It is important when selecting candidates for participation in workshops and other events, to choose people with a strong motivation for nature conservation and those who are prepared to learn and share information. This tends to mean that middle-ranking staff are the best future investment. However this does not mean that senior staff should be ignored. They require particular attention in the preparation of projects and provision of institutional support for participants in project such as this.

7. Has your organisation received funding under the Initiative before? If so, please give details.

No

8. Which overseas institutions, if any, will be involved in the project? Please explain the responsibilities of these institutions.

*EUROSITE* the European network of site management organisations will act as project coordinator, making the link between the experience-rich UK members and experience-poor participant countries in Central European and Baltic States.

- Estonian Fund for Nature
- Environmental Protection Institute, Estonia

- Latvian Fund for Nature
- Lithuanian Fund for Nature
- National Park Management Strategy, Biodiversity Conservation Centre, Russia
- Coalition for Wetland Protection in Poland

## PROJECT DETAILS

9. Define the purpose (main objective) of the project in line with the logical framework.

The main objective of the project is to give selected individuals from Central and Eastern European countries and Baltic States, understanding and practical skills in the management of wetland habitats. This will be achieved through interactive workshops both in the UK and focussed visits to host countries, through considering and producing Management Plans, through devising Communication and Education programmes with the aim of improving stakeholder management and through developing monitoring & recording programmes appropriate to the local situation.

The emphasis will be on learning through solving real problems identified by the target countries, as well as understanding the theoretical background to wetland ecosystem management and organisational development to enable ongoing work.

10. Is this a new project or the continuation of an existing one?

This is a new project building on information and materials already available.

11. What is the evidence for a demand or need for the work? How is the project related to conservation priorities in the host country(ies)? How would the project assist the host country with its obligations under the Biodiversity Convention?

### **How was the work identified?**

In 1997/1998 *EUROSITE* carried out a strategic review of the requirements for managing nature in Central and Eastern European countries, using financial support provided by the Dutch Government. A total of 12 countries were involved with contributions from managers from each country. As well as an authoritative review of conservation needs and priorities, this survey resulted in the identification of strategies for developing and supporting nature management in all 12 countries. Virtually all identified management and management planning as a critical requirement. Most countries also identified community involvement as a major need. The report found that there is an exceptionally high understanding of ecosystem change, species distribution and theoretical ecological management in the region but that most of this effort is not carried out within the framework of management plans or the various biodiversity action plans. Although strategies and action plans have been produced at the national level, in Estonia for example, implementation at the local level remains generally quite patchy.

*EUROSITE's Managing Nature in CEEC* report also recognised that due to the political environment in the region before democratisation, the involvement of communities in any planning process is atrophied. This leads to difficulties at the implementation stage, particularly in National Parks that are seen as the last bastion of the Communist regime in some countries. The need for and benefits of community involvement and participation in nature management is well-recognised throughout Europe. The skills are well developed and still developing in the UK and are needed in Central and Eastern Europe. Outstanding exceptions to this finding are the Nemunas Delta in Lithuania, managed by the principal NGO, the Lithuanian Fund for Nature and the Matsalu reserve in Estonia.

Since the strategy report was published, *EUROSITE* has developed a set of guidelines for the production of

management plans, and now seeks to promote their use throughout Europe. The Guidelines are endorsed by the Ramsar Bureau as being a useful tool on Ramsar sites, and have been presented to the European Habitats Committee for use on Natura 2000 sites. It should be stressed that the guidelines are not a blueprint for management planning, but are aimed to provide useful guidance on management principles and procedures that are applicable in a wide range of situations.

**How is the project related to conservation priorities in the host country?**

All Central & Eastern European Countries and Baltic States have protected area programmes of different forms e.g. National Parks, Nature Reserves, Protected Landscape Areas and others. They are all signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity and in many cases have written Biodiversity Strategies. Unfortunately very few have action plans which translate Strategy into activities which can make a difference 'on the ground'. For a number of countries their priority in the field of Biodiversity is to fulfil the requirements of the various European Union Directives so that they can become part of the Union. They seek to show that they can meet the requirements of the European Habitats Directive and the designation of a series of sites under Natura 2000. Management of these sites is often a lower priority than the need to harmonise legislation with that of the EU. The lack of resources for management in terms of staff is also a widespread problem.

Wetlands in Europe, as throughout the world, are a priority for nature conservation management because of the immediacy of detrimental impacts, their great natural value and the pressure of use on them from many different user groups. *EUROSITE's* research into conservation priorities in the region discovered nine broad ecosystem types considered to be of priority importance. Of these, wetland types were identified as being of high importance. There are clear opportunities to support wetland management projects and to provide training in wetland management. Many wetlands are protected through international agreements such as the Ramsar Convention.

Often all that is needed to commence and sustain management programmes on these important sites is some support and guidance on how to develop the processes. Once the process has begun and has some momentum, it will become relatively easier to solve the widespread problem of lack of resources. All the countries included within this project welcome the help they receive but wish to adapt it to their own circumstances. This project has been conceived with that longer-term aim in mind.

**How will the project assist the host country meet its obligations under the Biodiversity Convention?**

The project will help participants from participating countries to produce management plans dealing with priority wetland habitats and species, and action plans for wetland sites and areas. This work will be done within the nationally developed Biodiversity Strategies where they exist. These plans, and the lessons learned in their production, will form the basis of extending the knowledge and expertise necessary throughout host countries to deliver better biodiversity programmes. The project will also address the difficult issue of local community involvement, which will be necessary if the outcomes are to be sustainable.

Opportunities for local people to become involved in management at the local level will arise as an indirect result of management plans. Thus, a contribution will be made towards combating the twin problems of rural poverty and depopulation.

The UK has one of the most thorough and well-developed Biodiversity Action planning processes in Europe. Each organisation in this project partnership has played a key rôle in developing this expertise over the last 8 years.

12 In what ways can this project be considered a Darwin project? How does the project relate to the Darwin principles? How would the project be advertised as a Darwin project and in what ways would the Darwin name and logo be used?

### **Darwin project/ principles**

The project meets several of the Darwin objectives: It is aimed at countries that are rich in biodiversity, but poor in resources. It will draw on high quality UK experience and is collaborative, with participants from host countries learning through the exchange of experience applied to real problems they face in their work. Following the *EUROSITE* tradition, the project will rely on contributions in kind from both the UK and participant countries in many different ways from staff time, meeting room facilities, to the local use of transport. The project fits within the target areas: '*institutional capacity building*' and '*training*'

### **Advertisement and use of the logo**

Promotion of the project as a Darwin project would be carried out using the traditional means through the well-established and effective publicity mechanisms of the UK partnership organisations. The Darwin label or message would emphasise the principle of protecting biodiversity features through supporting those who recognise and understand the issues at the local level. A project promotion strategy will be devised early on in the first year.

13. Set out the proposed timetable for the work, including the programme's measurable outputs using the attached list of output measures.

### **2001/2002 Phase 1**

**Workshop 1. Working together:** This initial workshop will establish working groups between participants and counterparts from the UK partnership nature conservation organisations. It will identify the role of management plans in Biodiversity Strategies within host countries, both for wetland habitats and species action plans. Organisational structures for nature conservation within host countries will be clarified and real problems defined. Groups within each country will be set up and partnered with UK organisations. Work will begin drafting or amending management plans for one or more areas within host countries. The workshop will conclude with presentation of the results of group discussions to the whole workshop.

**Visit.** Each of the UK partners will visit the host country to assist in the review of the management plan in the light of local practicalities and organisational constraints. Improvements to the draft plan will be made. Lessons learned from this process will be summarised for feedback at workshop 2.

**Workshop 2. Learning together:** Modified management plans will be presented to the workshop. The general lessons learned will be identified and used to help the whole group. Management plans and lessons learned will be translated into the host language and arrangements made for distribution. The practical experience gained in developing plans will be used to modify the *EUROSITE* Management Planning Guidance. Mainline *EUROSITE*, the Electronic Information Exchange programme will be introduced to participants at this stage.

### **2002/2003 Phase 2**

**Workshop 1. Reviewing together:** The initial workshop of this phase will review experience in phase 1 and comments received in the production of management plans. The workshop will also identify the principal stakeholders affected by each plan and the communication issues and problems which need to be addressed. A communication plan to address the concerns of stakeholders will be produced for each management plan. Where necessary, management plans will be modified in the light of the communication needs. The lessons learned from this process will be outlined and their implications for management planning considered.

**Visit.** Each of the UK partners will visit the host country. Within each country the communication plan will be broadened to cover target groups, messages to be conveyed and the media to be used e.g. meetings, exhibitions, and schools programmes will be defined. Where possible, implementation of the

communications programme for each country will begin, although the funds budgeted will only cover some start-up costs.

**Workshop 2. Communicating together:** This workshop will review experience on communications and the changes to be made to management plans as a result of phase 1. Project management skills covering timing, costs and quality of results will be introduced to participants at this stage

### **2003/2004 Phase 3**

**Workshop 1 Monitoring together:** The initial workshop of this phase will review progress in amalgamating the original management plan with the communications and project management elements. It will then move on to consideration of monitoring and recording requirements and the uses to be made of such data. Data standards, data storage, national and international responsibilities will be identified for each management plan. Summaries of monitoring and recording requirements will be made.

**Visit.** Within each country, the monitoring and recording requirements for habitats and species within management plans will be identified.

**Workshop 2. Project Review** The final workshop will review the lessons learned on monitoring and recording and their fit with the management plans. *EUROSITE's* Twinning Programme and General Management Helpline will be used to maintain a continuing practical helpline. The lessons of the overall programme will be finalised and a report produced.

## Output Measures

Code number	Description	Output
6A	Number of people to receive training	15 people to be trained per year
6B	Number of training weeks to be provided	2 in each year 2001, 2002, 2003. Total 6 over the project.
7	Training materials produced.	Learning materials from the workshop programmes
8	Weeks by project in host countries	5 in each year 2001- 2003. Total 15 over the project
9	Habitat/species management plans	5 management plans with selected species action plans subsumed within them.
14A	Dissemination workshops	5 in 2003
15A	Number of national press releases in host country(ies)	1 per year per country
15B	Number of local press releases in host country(ies)	1 per year per country
15C	Number of national press releases in UK	1 per year
15D	Number of local press releases in UK	2 per year
16A	Number of newsletters to be produced	1 per year
16B	Estimated circulation of each newsletter in the host country(ies)	50 per country
16C	Estimated circulation of each newsletter in the UK	200
17B	Dissemination networks enhanced	<i>EUROSITE</i> network of site managers enhanced through partnerships, twinning & use of electronic information exchange system, MAINLINE

14. Do you know of any other individual/organisation carrying out similar work? Give the details of the work, explaining the similarities and differences.

Related projects are:-

1. The Peatlands programme run by Dundee University in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Wildlife Trust and the RSPB and funded by the Darwin initiative.
2. A project application to the Darwin initiative by the *Daphne* Centre for applied ecology in Slovakia aims to produce a management plan for grassland habitats.
3. WWF Poland has submitted a follow-up wetland management proposal to the Darwin Initiative for a management plan for the Biebrza National Park.

The *EUROSITE* proposal differs from the above in several ways:-

- The project covers a different habitat and will include marshes, fens and open waters as identified by the participants in the workshops.
- The project includes participants from several countries, who will benefit from the atmosphere of working together and presenting results to each other.
- As well as management planning, the project includes a wide range of integrated subjects covering

practical nature management, communication and education programmes for people affected by the plan, and coverage of monitoring and recording issues.

- The project will be tied into a continuing partnership both with UK organisations, but also with *EUROSITE* through its electronic information exchange programme.

If the *EUROSITE* proposal were accepted we would expect to collaborate with both *Daphne* and WWF Poland to ensure co-ordination of activities and synergies where possible.

### **Related *EUROSITE* activities**

*EUROSITE* is currently implementing a project funded by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries on basic management skills for all types of management organisations within Central & Eastern Europe, particularly those concentrating on grassland management. The project will firstly produce a strategy and action plan for each of the 13 countries within our defined region on management planning and project management needs. Management organisations in countries selected as priorities for action will be assisted through increased availability of resources and support from the whole *EUROSITE* network. There are clear synergistic benefits to this project application. For example, feedback will be provided through which improvements and refinements to the Guidelines will be made. They will also provide contacts, which will become the basis of continuing development within each country.

The above project differs from this application in several ways:-

- it involves the whole spread of *EUROSITE* members from France, Netherlands, UK and CEEC
- it concentrates on grassland management
- it is concerned more with general capacity building for organisations rather than looking specifically at the management planning process on natural sites
- it is geographically more widespread, covering 13 countries. This application will focus on five countries.

The work proposed in this application seeks to build on this foundation and on the many contacts within the *EUROSITE* network, who confirm the need for expertise within the 3 main areas to be covered within the project.

15. Will the project include training and development? Please indicate how many trainees will be involved, from which countries and what will be the criteria for selection. How will you measure the effectiveness of the training and will those trained then be able to train others?  
Where appropriate give the length of any training course.

The proposed project is centred on training and development to increase capacity in Wetland Biodiversity in the host countries. It is expected that a total of 15 trainees (3 from each country) will be involved. Participants will be selected on the basis of their involvement in practical work in wetland biodiversity management and their existing and potential influence on others working in the field of biodiversity in their own countries.

The country visits (each 3 days long) proposed in the middle of each year will be used to disseminate the results as they develop from the UK workshops, and will assist the participants in improving their own skills in training others. Moreover the ongoing partnerships, which will be established between UK partners, and participants will provide continuity beyond the end of the project and will aim to establish focal points within each country for on-going learning.

Each UK workshop lasting about 5 days will be of a training nature i.e. 10 days each year giving a total of 30 days over the project.

16. How will trainee outcomes/destinations be monitored after the end of the training?

Over the 3-year period of the project, partnerships will be established between the UK organisations and their Central European/Baltic counterparts. This will assist the continuing development of the individual trainees/participants. In addition, participating organisations will be encouraged to become involved with the *EUROSITE* network and in particular its electronic information exchange system Mainline *EUROSITE*.

17. How is the work of the project expected to continue after the end of grant period? A clear exit strategy must be included.

The work will continue through the *EUROSITE* General Management Helpline and the participation of managers from the Central European and Baltic State participants in within country workshops and the range of *EUROSITE* activities.

#### MONITORING AND EVALUATION

18. Describe how progress on the project would be monitored and evaluated in terms of achieving its aims and objectives, both during the lifetime of the project and at its conclusion. How would you ensure that it achieves value for money? What arrangements will be made for disseminating results? If applicable, how would you seek the views of clients/customers?

Quality control will be maintained through a Project Board made up of the UK organisations and chaired by the President of *EUROSITE*. It will monitor budget, timeliness and quality of results e.g. production of management plans, communication plans and monitoring and recording programmes. Learning and adaptation to the needs of the workshops will be assessed frequently during and between workshops by the project team.

The lessons learned during the project will be summarised for more general use and translated into host country languages. During the visits by UK personnel to host countries, opportunities will be taken to disseminate results to others within the host organisations.

Each workshop will include feedback and questionnaire sessions and an overall assessment will be made of value of the final plan and the learning process in producing it.

19. Logical framework. Please enter the details of your project onto the matrix using the note at Annex B of the Guidance Note.

Project summary	Measurable indicators	Means of verification	Important assumptions
<p><b>Goal</b> To help Central European and Baltic States with the conservation of wetland biodiversity</p>	<p>Evidence of start of implementation of management plans, communication programmes, preparation of materials, monitoring, and the wider application of management planning principles. Connection with the wider European nature conservation community.</p>	<p>Assessment during and after the project of the value of the results in assisting conservation of wetland biodiversity conservation. Adjustments will be made where necessary as a result of the assessments. Working processes will also be assessed for their helpfulness towards the overall goal.</p>	<p>Political support for biodiversity conservation is real and continuing</p> <p>Process of 'cascading' learning and information within host countries works effectively.</p>
<p><b>Purpose</b> The development of the capacity of key individuals in key nature management organisations (expertise &amp; implementation) on wetland habitat &amp; species management, communication with stakeholders, and management monitoring &amp; recording systems.</p>	<p>Completion of the overall project with 15 participants from Central Europe and Baltic States. Assessment of improvements in their understanding and expertise.</p>	<p>Throughout the workshops, continuous assessment will be made of the participants progress. Modifications will be made in the light of the assessments.</p>	<p>Participants prove that they have the personal capacities to amalgamate the scientific, communication and administrative skills for which they were selected.</p>
<p><b>Outputs</b> Habitat &amp; Species Management Plans, Stakeholder Communication programmes, monitoring and recording systems and learning materials.</p>	<p>Production of 5 Management Plans of 'approved' quality. Production of 5 communication programmes and a start of their effective use. Production &amp; start of monitoring programmes related to management objectives. Production of learning, materials of wider 'in-country' use.</p>	<p>The project quality controller will assess the quality of outputs assisted by the UK Team and the participants themselves during workshops.</p>	<p>Participants will devote time and effort to implementing plans and lessons learned.</p>
<p><b>Activities</b> UK workshops &amp; 'in-country' mentoring visits dealing with 'real' issues and problems on management, stakeholders &amp; monitoring. Translation &amp; production of learning materials.</p>	<p>Effective workshops managed to high quality within budget and timescale and with attendance of target individuals</p>	<p>Feedback and questionnaires on the usefulness of workshop and country visit activities will continue throughout the project</p>	<p>Liaison with and participation of Government Departments and Institutes.</p>