

Central and Eastern Europe
**Building Capacity in Wetlands Biodiversity
Conservation in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania,
Poland and Russia**

Darwin Initiative workshop 4

Management Planning and Stakeholders

Stone, Staffordshire, UK

5th – 9th March 2003

Le réseau des organismes pour la gestion du patrimoine naturel européen

The network of organisations managing Europe's natural heritage

Building Capacity in Wetlands Biodiversity Conservation in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia
Darwin Initiative: *Workshop 4: Phase 2: Management Planning and Stakeholders*

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01: Workshop Information

01.1: Workshop Host and Location Details

Location: Stone, Staffordshire, England, 5-9 March 2003

The Wildlife Trusts is a partnership of charitable trusts, which forms one of the largest conservation organisations in the UK. Nationally the Wildlife Trusts have over 400,000 members, employ 2000 staff and manage 2,500 nature reserves covering over 100,000 hectares.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust was established in 1969 and is one of the 49 trusts that make up the Wildlife Trusts. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) owns or leases 32 sites that are managed as nature reserves, covering almost 1000 hectares. An important source of income is generated through the Trust's 10,000 private and 70 corporate members. SWT currently employs 25 staff.

Staffordshire is one of the largest inland English Counties covering approximately 273,000 hectares and at its greatest length and width is 56 miles (≈90km) long and 38 miles (≈61km) wide. The county is the geographical meeting place of northern and southern England and supports habitats and species found at the extremes of their national range.

The diverse geology and geomorphology of Staffordshire has helped to create an extremely diverse county. The county has three well-defined physical regions: -

- **The Northern Hills** – this upland area is best known for the *White Peaks* area of the *Peak District National Park* – an area of carboniferous limestone supporting a distinct calcareous flora. Meanwhile, the hills to the west are characterised by the underlying Millstone Grit, which coupled with the high rainfall, has given rise to the extensive moorland and acidic vegetation of the area.
- **The Central Plain** – is a low-lying agricultural area dominated by the River Trent catchment, one of England's major river systems.
- **The Southern Plateau** – Much of this area is underlain by Triassic sandstone and dominated by Cannock Chase. Whilst most of the county lies within the catchment of the *River Trent*, much of the southern area falls into the catchment of the *River Severn*.

From untitled SWT information sheet.

01.2: Workshop attendance

Dates: 5th 9th March 2003

Participants: 23 participants from 7 countries*

Estonia (3)

Latvia (3)

Lithuania (2)

Netherlands (1) (EUROSITE representative)

Poland (3)

Russia (4)

United Kingdom (7)

Hosted by: **Staffordshire Wildlife Trust**

02: Project Background

To help key individuals from Poland, Russia and the Baltic States improve understanding and practical skills in the management of wetland habitats. The project is led by a consortium of leading UK conservation organisations and *EUROSITE*, National Trust, RSPB, Scottish Natural Heritage, English Nature and the Wildlife Trusts.

03: Workshop aims

1. Review of objectives.
2. Assessment of stakeholder involvement in management plans.
3. Identification of stakeholder groups as part of the management planning process.
4. Identification of problems to be solved.
5. Identification of 'tried and tested' methods of working with stakeholders. What works and what does not work?
6. Developing skills for communicating with stakeholders.
7. How does knowledge of stakeholders effect the management plan?

This report is an account of the fourth workshop in the project.

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04: Workshop Activities

Wednesday 5th March

Evening – Arrival of participants

Thursday 6th March

Morning

- Review of programme – direction?
- Outline of workshop objectives.
- Presentation on Doxey Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSi), Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve (*Rachel Wheatcroft and Steve Bicknell*).
- Field visit to Doxey Marshes SSSI.

Afternoon

- Review of the field visit – *results and lessons*.
- Stakeholder involvement in management plans.
- UK experience of 'Planning for Real' at Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Classification of stakeholders for each management plan/country group – what problems are you trying to solve? When dealing with stakeholders, what works and why?
- Group presentations on stakeholder information
- Questions and comments.
- Role-play – dealing with the most important stakeholders (face to face).
- Lessons learned - comments and discussion.

Friday 7th March

Morning

- Field visit to Fenns and Whixall Moss National Nature Reserve (NNR). A look at the management and community issues at Bettisfield Moss, plus the management of Fenns and Whixall Moss. *Guide* – Joan Daniels.

Afternoon

- Review of field visit.
- Preparation of stakeholder action plans: -
- What tools/support will you need?
- What will the cost be?
- Who will do what?
- Review of the day – lessons learned and how they might be applied.
- 'Fund Raising' – A presentation by Nigel Evans, Corporate Manager for Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

Saturday 8th March

Morning

- Action planning for stakeholder involvement (*group work*).
- Report back to plenary.
- *Next action* – country visits and next workshop.

Close workshop

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05: Field Visits

05.1: Field Visit 1: *Doxey Marshes SSSI*

Background

Doxey Marshes SSSI is located in the centre of Stafford and is both the Trust's largest nature reserve and a regionally important site for breeding and wintering birds and areas of wetland habitat. The site occupies a 'wedge' shape piece of land that extends to the central area of the town of Stafford – the *Marshes* are essentially being squeezed by a growing population of ≈ 66,000; urban development continues at the South-eastern perimeter of the site with the development of modern apartment blocks.

Hydrology - Lying in the flood plain of the River Sow, Doxey Marshes has had a long cultural association with the town of Stafford. It is likely that there was little significant change in the management of the marshes and the flood plain of the River Sow between the middle ages and the beginning of the 20th century. However, after 1945 development has virtually cut off the SSSI from the surrounding countryside. Subsidence from previous brine pumping in the area has also had an impact on the marshes in the last 50 years by creating large pools (*flashes*) and areas of shallow swamp habitat.

The reserve has a complex hydrology with several important arterial drains and waterways associated with the River Sow. In 1979 flood alleviation works were carried out which had an enormous impact on the frequency of flooding and the capability of the marsh to hold back water for any length of time.

Wildlife – The reserve contains a mosaic of habitats including grazing marsh, reedbeds, pools, hedgerows and the largest areas of reed sweet-grass swamp in the Midlands. The marshes contain over 250 species of flowering plants including species such as *common meadow rue*, *yellow iris*, *purple loosestrife*, *angelica*, *marsh valerian* and *flowering rush*. Doxey Marshes is best known for its diversity of birds – over 80 species have been recorded at this site – most significantly populations of breeding waders such as *snipe*, *lapwing*, *redshank* and *little ringed plover*. More easily seen are many pairs of *swans*, *grey herons*, *mallards* and *teal*. There are also notable breeding populations of *reed and sedge warbler*, *reed bunting*, *skylark* and *water rail*. The reserve is also home to a number of mammals including *water vole*, fox and several species of bat. Otters have also recolonised the marshes after many years of absence.

Management

Access – There are three main public footpaths across the site, with several other marked permissive routes. A circular walk from the old railway line provides access to visitor facilities and views across the marshes.

Objectives – The two most important management factors are maintaining optimal grazing regimes and adequate water levels. The reserve is managed by grazing with cattle. Different bird species require different grazing regimes – grazing management attempts to accommodate the preference of different species. Natural winter flooding and subsequent slow drainage in spring are crucial for the wetland habitats and species. Current water levels on the SSSI are primarily controlled by the Environment Agency and the Sow and Penk Drainage Board. The Trust continues to work with these bodies to restore former water levels.

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Issues – The site is subject to regular **vandalism**, largely targeted at *SWT* interpretative material and visitor facilities; although the carefully regulated drainage ditches have also been targeted in the past. The *urban fringe* location of the site is blamed for the frequency of vandalism. *SWT* is currently attempting to limit the frequency of damage by ‘reducing the opportunity and reward for vandalism’ a process which involves building structures such as bird-hides that do not lend themselves to activities other than bird-watching and are low in cost.

Illegal **refuse dumping** around the periphery of the site has limited impact upon the *sanctuary* areas, but presents an eye-sore for visitors and can have the effect of reducing the general public’s perceived value of the site, this is an on-going problem, also symptomatic of Doxey Marsh’s urban proximity.

The complex **drainage** system within Doxey Marshes that was once used to drain the site, is now used to stop water leaving the site to maintain wetland habitat. The community surrounding the Marshes voices some concern about **water levels** – there is concern that water levels might have negative impact upon their property; this is largely the result of some subsistence in a housing estate on the northern perimeter of the reserve.

Visitor **disturbance** to *sanctuary* areas is managed by creating visitor *focal points* at the centre of the site – in theory drawing people away from the sensitive areas. The disturbance received from the adjacent motorway and mainline railway is intensive and constant, although fortunately the *sanctuary* areas of the Marshes are positioned slightly away from the transport routes. Pollution from these transport routes was not presented as an issue for the site; whilst intake from the local storm drain presents some cause for concern.

25% of Doxey Marshes is managed by farmers, this coupled with *SWT*’s creation of *sanctuary* areas has created **access** issues. Local residents make up the vast majority of visitors to the site, and in many cases have visitors to the site for longer than the 20 years that it has been protected as a nature reserve. Consequently there are issues associated with the public’s perceived freedom to roam on the site. In addition, some farmers have fenced-off their land with materials that do not blend well with the natural settings, this is not liked by the public, and in addition to this ‘*keep out*’ and ‘*private land*’ signs can be seen throughout the main route through the Marshes. Negotiation with landowners seeks to reduce the visual impact (*and associated public reaction*) of land ownership on Doxey Marshes.

An abundance of **Canada Geese** represents a threat to the breeding and wintering bird populations – *SWT* interpretative material encourages visitors to not feed them (*a bizarre British Sunday afternoon pastime*), explaining that they disturb the activities of other bird species.

Contains sections adapted from ‘*Doxey Marshes: a 300 acre wetland reserve in the heart of the County town*’ leaflet , no date/reference

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05.2: Field visit 2: Fenn’s, Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses National Nature Reserve Background

The Fenn’s, Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses straddle the English/Welsh border about 30km South-East of Wrexham (*Wrecsam*). The *Mosses* are of international importance for wildlife, being one of the most southerly lowland raised bogs in Britain and the third largest at 966 ha.

Lowland raised bogs are domes of slowly growing *Sphagnum* moss peat, surviving on rainwater. Bog moss draws-up, holds and acidifies trapped rainwater thereby waterlogging the bog surface so that only specialist plants and animals can survive. Dying plants and other organic matter from the vegetation on or around the bogs is preserved within this waterlogged landscape – forming the peat.

The *Mosses* have a history of being extensively drained for commercial peat extraction –

preventing waterlogging, ultimately drying out large areas of the site and causing large areas of dry peat to rot. Species favoring dryer landscape began to take over, notably birch, pine and grasses. A dramatic increase in the rate of peat extraction (*with improved mechanisation*) led to the 1990 decision to save the site for wildlife conservation.

Wildlife – The reserve supports characteristic bog vegetation of *bog rosemary*, *bog asphodel*, *common* and *hare's-tail cotton-sedge*, *cranberry*, the insectivorous *sundew* and *lesser bladderwort* and 13 species of bogmoss. The site is particularly important for invertebrates which number over 1700 species including *large heath butterflies*, *white-faced darter dragonflies* and *great raft spiders*.

Management

Large scale peat extraction has since stopped and *English Nature (EN)* and the *Countryside Council for Wales (Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru) (CCW)* are now rehabilitating the reserve to actively grow bog. Smothering flora and invasive trees are being cleared and water levels are being restored quite rapidly by damming the drains.

Brief conservation management history: -

1992 – *British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)*, EN and CCW workers began clearing old tracks leading to the site and small pine from relatively *open* bog areas.

Initial *man-handling* of invasive vegetation from the site was facilitated by spraying *birch* with *Krenite* – (using thin wheeled tractors and other machinery was impossible due to the wetness of the site).

2000 – saw the completion of the first *hard-access* roads into the site. This access route allowed heavy duty vehicles access to the site for timber removal.

Work continues to remove *pine* and *birch* from the site (*with the use of a 'Skyline' which removes timber by carrying it above the ground therefore preserving the underlying landscape*) and to control site drainage using both contemporary surveys and local knowledge provided by former peat diggers now working to restore the Marshes.

From '*Fenn's, Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses National Nature Reserve*' (leaflet) English Nature 1998, and '*Bettisfield Moss Timber Clearance*' (report) Dr. Joan Daniels 2002.

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06: Review of the Field Visits

As well as providing useful site management case studies workshop field visits were also treated as an exercise in stakeholder communication. Workshop participants were invited to observe and critically evaluate the proceedings of the visit, participants were also encouraged to ask the field visit hosts questions that might be of relevance to stakeholders – the repose of the host and the structure and content of the visit was later evaluated from the perspective of stakeholder communication.

06.1: Field visit 1: *Doxey Marshes SSSI*

- Being on-site allowed to see what was being described – it made the experience real – allowed for practical illustrations of issues/work. The effectiveness of in-the-field demonstration can not be achieved in a conference room/indoor meeting environment. Although the noise generated by adjacent motorway and mainline railway at times limited the quality/use of the initial dialogue.
- The guides (*site rangers*) were enthusiastic and knowledgeable; their enthusiasm energised the group and their knowledge of the site suggested competence in its management.
- The guides did not always agree on issues surrounding the site, not so much as to suggest indecision but in way that implied a good team-working environment where the expression of ideas is welcome. Dialogue between the hosts inferred a real passion for their work.
- The guides were open in their response to questions, explaining the focus of their current work and admitting they were learning all the time – there was no attempt to claim complete control over the management and future of the site; although they

were confident in their identification of priority management issues – achieving a greater community involvement at the top of their list.

- While the hosts did little to inquire as to the nature or composition of the group the visit was conducted so that the information was pitched at a suitable level.
- The participants rarely questioned the hosts.
- There were too few guides to successfully orchestrate the visit; at times the participants were split into several groups, some without a local expert. Therefore missing-out on information.
- Site management plans were focused on community involvement (*based on the knowledge that the majority of visitors to the site are locals*). The hosts explained the concept of the ‘chain of knowledge’ – the dissemination of info by informing some community members and allowing this information to filter through the rest of the community.
- The hosts explained that fostering a sense of responsibility in the locals for the management and upkeep of the reserve has shown signs of success. This has included the use of voluntary wardens from the local community. Two of these wardens were present at the visit; once more allowing for a real example of the management of the reserve.
- Interpretative material at the site was seen to be limited and was infrequently changed. It was suggested that as their most frequent visitors were from the local community (*therefore visiting the site often*) that interpretative material should be changed often as this was an ideal platform to inform the public about more site management related issues and strengthen their ‘chain of knowledge’.

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- Thought process behind landscape planning was not clear – how was this reflecting the ancient landscape and how was this shown/viewed by the local community.
- The issue of the proximity of two major transport links to the site was not really addressed – the implications on the perceived quality of the site and its consequent treatment by elements of the local population.
- The weather was pleasant during the visit – this is always useful.

06.2: Field Visit 2: Fenn’s, Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses National Nature Reserve

To avoid unnecessary repetition, the review of this field visit does not restate observations similar to those in the previous section; it is important to note that many similar observations were made.

- The host was quick to take ‘control’ of the visiting group, informing participants of the health and safety issues relevant to the visit (*possibly over-stated*).
- The host spoke clearly and invited participants to ask questions or request repetition if they missed details. A hand-out was provided in-case all was not understood; a useful practice as long as the media does not serve to distract participants from the focus of the visit. The media provided did not place the site in the context of the wider region or the UK, this is not ideal for a group led to the site and unfamiliar with the geography of the UK.

- Other members of the host party were introduced well and at relevant times.
 - The host was quick to learn participant names, making the visit more personal.
8. Although the host was aware of the focus of the visit, there was limited reference to stakeholder management with site description dominating the excursion.
 9. The host described the advantages of bringing stakeholders on-site and demonstrating the goal of the management plan. In this instance the stakeholders were invited to witness an area of the bog that has recovered well; this provided an example of ‘the way things could be’.
 10. Examples of stakeholders with active interest in the bog were also given. Wreath

makers who collect sphagnum from the site were not prevented from collecting the moss, they were encouraged to collect limited amounts and charged a minimum fee for the right to continue. This has proved a success in limiting the damage done to recovering bog areas. The use of stakeholders has not been limited to moss collectors. A former peat digger has been employed to assist in the restoration work and provides invaluable knowledge about the site, especially with reference to land drainage. The host explained that the knowledge provided by the former peat digger had sped up the process of restoration. The use of local knowledge in a management plan will be reassuring to other locals and those suspicious of motive.

11. The weather during the visit was poor; wet, windy and cold. This made the participant group slow and not very responsive – it was not a good day to be in the field and stationary for long periods of time.

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12. There was no real time for questions as the host was always talking; if the idea of a stakeholder meeting is to answer the questions of the stakeholders then this might not be the ideal situation.

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07: Communicating with, and understanding stakeholders

07.1: Preparing for a meeting with stakeholders

The participants were given the opportunity to test their skills in communicating with stakeholders by taking part in a role-play session to simulate an initial meeting with a stakeholder. The following observations (*not ranked*) were made during this exercise: -

- The atmosphere during a meeting and the rapport between individuals was greatly improved by efforts to ‘break the ice’ at the initial stages of the meeting.
- The presentation of information (*relating to the management plan*) or perhaps a token of appreciation for the stakeholders time is a good idea, although the timing of the presentation is important. The time available for a meeting with a stakeholder is likely to be short, distracting the stakeholder from the purpose of your meeting is only wasting valuable time.
- Be careful with the language that you use. For example, do not ‘jump the gun’ and use words such as ‘contract’ or ‘commitment’, at the early stages of dialogue this will likely deter the stakeholder from co-operation. Do not make the stakeholder feel like they are being pressured. Also, avoid using negative words like ‘problem’ (*in relation to the activities or motivation of the stakeholder*) this could make the stakeholder feel threatened – inhibiting your progress.
- Do not approach the meeting with the attitude of a salesman. The stakeholder has a story also, take time to listen to it and realise that you will have to be flexible to get what you want.
- When you agree with a stakeholder make sure that they know it, draw upon your common issues to build up a rapport.
- You have one common issue with the stakeholder, you have a problem and it needs a solution – establish this common ground and work from here.
- Do not claim to know about the activities of the stakeholder based on information from third-parties. This will raise suspicion in the stakeholder, you do not want them to think that you have been ‘spying’, you need the stakeholder to trust you and have confidence in your ability to act on ‘real’ knowledge.
- Always thank the stakeholder for their time – take them and their work seriously.
- Try to establish a second meeting (*or at least the willingness of the stakeholder to participate in one*) before you finish the first meeting.

- Chose the location of the meeting carefully. It might be good practice to meet the stakeholder at the location of their choice.

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07.2: Stakeholder satisfaction

13. What definite information do you **have / need** on the *wishes and expectations of different groups*?
14. What definite information do you **have / need** about what stakeholders know about *products/services*?
15. What definite information do you **have / need** about *satisfying stakeholder expectations*?
16. What definite information do you **have / need** about what influences stakeholder *satisfaction*?
17. How do answers relate to each other?
18. What definite information do you **have / need** about *suggestions of how to improve products/services*?

07.2.1: Knowledge of Stakeholders: Latvia

Kemeri National Park

- Landowners request more basic information, detailing the location and scale of management plan activities
- Landowners want to profit from their property and therefore need reassurance that the management plan will not devalue their land
- The management plan has to consider the problem of inactive landowners
- Landowners must become more aware of the restrictions and rules associated with a National Park
- More information about EU funding for farmers needs to be distributed, landowners are currently badly informed
- Additional information campaigns need to be targeted at landowners, the parks newsletter should be used to full effect and other material are currently used to keep stakeholders informed about the management planning process

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07.2.2: Knowledge of Stakeholders: Lithuania

Dukstyna Meadows: rich species grassland with very rare butterflies and rare plants.

Stakeholders

- Farmers [1]
- Government/land services [2]
- LFFNC (NGO) [3]
- Scientists [4]

We understand the wishes of stakeholder groups...

[1] + [2] + [3] + [4]

Stakeholder groups understanding our services/products

[1] + [2] + [4]

We understand the expectations/satisfaction of stakeholder groups...

[1] + [2] + [3] + [4]

07.2.3: Knowledge of Stakeholders: Estonia

Wishes/expectations of landowners

- The right to own land
- Access to technical advice
- Financial support

Landowner knowledge of what is on offer from the management plan

- Generally a good awareness
- Knowledge of the advantages of owning land in the reserve

Satisfying the expectations of landowners

1. Knowledge and relationship with individual stakeholders allows for a reasonably good idea of the expectations of individuals and groups and allows for the prediction of reactions to different management planning scenarios

Improving support for landowners

- More knowledge needed about funding opportunities
- More information required about training courses and appropriate farming techniques
- Greater degree of information sharing would be beneficial

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07.2.4: Knowledge of stakeholders: Poland

Regional authority

19. A young and inexperienced department, some staff are interested in the project but do not have enough time to become involved

20. The regional authority has faith in the professionalism of the management planners

21. The regional authority is keen to publicise partnerships between themselves and the management planners

22. Keen to participate in a workshop illustrating good practice

Local authority

- An unstable department that changes every 4 years and has debts of Z5-6 million (£1 million)
- The local authority is aware of the management plan and those behind it but has limited involvement that is effected by the frequent changes to the departments internal structure
- The debts of this authority prevent them from contributing financially to the management plan

Maritime office

- Sometimes supportive and sometimes critical
- They are aware of the management plan but do not always agree with its approach
- They are always requesting evidence, dealing with them is relatively time consuming
- The department is a high maintenance stakeholder, always requiring good evidence and written propositions – if treated in the correct manner they can be convinced

07.2.5: Knowledge of stakeholders: Russia

Identified stakeholder groups

- Local/regional authorities [a]
- Landowners [b]
- Local community [c]
- Forestry service [d]
- National park [e]
- Visitors [f]
- Recreation and tourists [g]
- Oblast administration [h]
- Voluntary sector [i]

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What do we need to know?

- What do they know about us?
- Our problems, plans, programme
- What is their real agenda?
- Their problems, plans, programme
- What can they offer us?
- What can we offer them?
- What problems are we causing them?
- What problems are they causing us?
- How do we get to know them?
- How do they get to know us?

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07.3: Case Studies

07.3.1: ‘Funding nature conservation’: a presentation by Nigel Evans, Corporate Manager for Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

- Nigel Evans is the Corporate Manager for Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, he is responsible for the ‘marketing’ of the Trust and adopts the role of ‘salesman’ to raise funds for the conservation work of the SWT.
- If you want to gain the support of stakeholders, you need to let them know you exist – conservation requires money.
- Companies like to be seen doing good to the environment, by donating money to SWT companies can ‘buy into the environment’ and satisfy their shareholders and customers who appreciate the positive environmental message that is given out – ‘environmentally friendly’ – ‘we know that we do some damage to the environment, but we are doing something about it’.
- SWT actively targets larger companies as they have more money and most likely a large shareholder base and audience (customers and public) that will react to the apparent environmental awareness of a company.
- Donations and charitable partnership with large companies not only increases the annual turnover of the SWT but it also serves to increase the ‘audience’ for their conservation work.

23. The SWT does not compromise its position or work ethic to secure donations. If a potential donor or existing donor does not agree with SWT plans or proposes developments that are not in the interest of SWT or nature conservation then a partnership will not be established and an existing partnership will be annulled.

- An organisation wishing to gain the support of local business should devise their

corporate image with care as it is this that will attract corporate sponsors. In the case of the SWT the selection of the Badger for use on the Trust logo has caused problems. The Badger is known to spread TB to cattle and therefore this logo has the potential to complicate relations between certain potential donors.

- SWT has felt the effects of a struggling economy. As businesses make cut-backs the donations made to SWT are reduced, as is the number of donors.
- SWT has no similar competition for charitable donations as no other organisation in the area is doing the same.
- SWT accepts donations of services and goods, not only money. For example the SWT has accepted building work from building companies instead of currency donation. This is extremely beneficial; in such an example the relative cost of building materials is cheap compared to the final cost of a completed building – this allows a building company to make a donation with high value at a minimum cost.

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07.3.2: Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ‘Planning for Real®’

- Planning for real is a technique used to actively engage local people in deciding about activities their community, most commonly used in urban areas such as housing estates.
- Planning for real adopts a two stage process: -
 2. An open event generally over a number of hours, open to anyone. Participants are provided with ‘issue cards’ describing potential or real problems within the community or focus area (in this example Cannock Chase AONB, Staffordshire). The participants are invited to place these issue cards on a map of the focus area in the location/s where they view the issue/s as being problematic (blank cards are made available for participant suggested issues). After the session the positions of the cards are recorded.
 3. A short time after the initial session a ‘prioritisation meeting’ is held. During this meeting local people prioritise the issues and agree on the next stages of the process. Cannock Chase has made use of Planning for Real as an aid to producing a 5 year management plan for the AONB. The Planning for real system is deemed appropriate for developing management plans at the AONB for the following reasons: -
 - Any member of the local and regional community can be involved in the process
 - People can spend as long as they wish at the event, and have a whole day to turn-up and make their contribution
 - Everybody has an equal opportunity to make their point, the relaxed atmosphere and absence of a formal meeting prevents individuals from dominating the proceedings giving everybody an equal voice.

Adapted from Cannock Chase AONB Unit document ‘*Cannock Chase AONB and Planning for Real*’ undated

* ‘Planning for Real®’ is a registered name with Neighborhood Initiatives Foundation (NIF), UK.

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08: Action planning for stakeholder involvement

08.1: Latvia

- Divided into manageable stakeholder groups
- Land owners (land should be purchased during the LIFE project)
- Farmers (intensive)
- Extensive farms
- Forest owners (with positive reaction to management plans)
- Forest owners (with negative reaction to management plans)
- Parks staff

- **Land owners**
- Who are they? – Create a list/database
- Hold public and individual meetings
- Follow the official procedure of land acquisition
- **Farmers (intensive)**
- Hold meetings and establish a working relationship with this group
- Encourage the reduction of land tax (local municipality)
- Facilitate the application for and increase awareness of EU subsidies – rural support service.
- **Farmers (extensive)**
- Raise awareness about sustainable farming
- Use information campaigns - local media
- Give advice on official procedures (tax, EU funds etc.)
- **Forest owners (positive)**
- Raise awareness using local media
- Hold workshops
- Use positive examples and create a vision of the goal of the management plan
- **Forest owners (negative)**
- Awareness raising – local press
- Holding workshops and meetings
- Using positive examples and create a vision of the goal of the management plan
- **Parks staff**
- Training courses and workshops in co-operation with WWF, LU, Rural Advisory and consultation services – PR specialists in capacity building

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08.2: Lithuania

‘Maintaining favorable conservation status in the species rich meadows of Dukstyna’

Stakeholders are categorised using a table as illustrated below: -

Priority action type

Stakeholder group Level of support Short-term Long-term

??? H ??? ???

??? L ??? ???

??? M ??? ???

??? M ??? ???

The stakeholder groups and information regarding their level of support/co-operation are recorded using a High, Medium and Low system – this allows identification of priority actions and the work required to achieve them. This method exploits the practice of simplifying a stakeholder management plan by breaking down the stakeholders into defined and manageable groups.

What is the problem?

- Loss of traditional agricultural practices
- Hay-making and grazing has been overtaken by natural succession
- Still little knowledge of stakeholder opinion with regards to the situation and the management plan
- Communication about the management plan needs to be increased – press campaigns/meetings/personal contact – are the most useful
- More needs to be done to demonstrate success and illustrate the benefits of the

project – more media exposure required for this

- More research is needed into the profitable side of the project (for the stakeholders) – such as eco-farming, eco-tourism etc.

What can be done?

- Communication with farmers: -
- Build an understanding of the motivations of those on all sides of the debate
- Build and maintain relationships
- More information is needed about the farmers and their needs, wishes etc.
- Communicate positive messages about the management plan
- Find funding for the project – municipality and/or private
- Co-ordination of staffing and equipment
- Support farmers in their work – marketing of their produce

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08.3: Estonia

Stakeholders broken down into two defined groups: -

- Land owners/managers
- Foresters

Action planning for stakeholder involvement takes the following form: -

Land owners/managers

OBJECTIVE HOW WHO WHEN HOW MUCH

Maintain good
relationship

Study tours

Work camp

EOS

EOS/EAC/SNC

29.03.03

19.04.03

LIFE funded

£1000 LIFE?

Sharing of local
knowledge

Special issue of
local journal on
historical and
cultural practices

Local historians

EOS

???.05.03 £1000 LIFE or
other

Training and
information

Face to face
contact

Public meetings

Technical
consultation and
advise

EOS

EOS

EOS/ENV dept.

Ongoing

??05.03
Spring/summer
03

Staff time
Staff time/
entertainment
costs

Foresters

OBJECTIVE HOW WHO WHEN HOW MUCH

Improve relations One to one
contact

EOS ??04.03 Staff time

Influence forestry
plans

Identify
opportunities in
the planning
cycle

Working with
forest

conservation
officers

EOS

EOS

??04.03

Ongoing

Staff time

Staff time

Agreeing on
specific LIFE

objectives

Evidence

Establish legal
obligation

EOS

EOS/FCO/ECO

Eurosite

Ongoing Staff time

This project has been acknowledged as a large task, it is uncertain that the goals and their timelines can be achieved.

The Tagamõisa Peninsular is experiencing social problems that complicate the application of a management plan, these include high unemployment rates, an aging population and alcoholism. The management plan for the peninsular has been 'condensed' during the last 10 months, to produce a more user friendly working document that is more easily interpreted by the local and regional population. The next phase of the management planning process will focus on improving communication

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with and between the stakeholder groups, building upon a 'planning for real' type exercise. The priority for 2003 is to further inform and involve local people and other stakeholders in the management planning process; this will be attempted using: -

- Natura 2000 information day/s
- Voluntary camps with workshops and opportunity for dialogue
- Field visits –building on the positive results of nature conservation... 'how things can be' etc.
- Involving the local educational facilities

- Producing and distributing an information booklet
- Drafting of an ecotourism action plan – identifying and informing of the economic benefits of nature conservation for the region

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08.4: Poland

- Preparation of actions for each stakeholder group
- Regional authority
- Local authority
- Maritime office
- Grazers
- **Regional authority**
- Use of publications and radio (4 x year) – stressing progress and positive elements of management plan.
- Workshops
- Publicising partnerships
- **Local authority**
- Showing the potential income
- Site visits – including visits outside of country where success can be illustrated – trip to the Netherlands planned for 2004
- **Maritime office**
- Proposal for changing laws – April/May 2003
- Workshops on maritime law for nature conservation – June 2003

4. Grazers

5. 2 grazers (husband and wife) – the site needs the grazing (invasion of *fragmitis*) – the grazers are from another village and are alcoholics, they have 75 cows.

6. The couple can not (currently) meet the conditions of a drafted grazing agreement – training in June 2003 will hopefully resolve this.

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08.5: Russia

National Park ‘Russia North’: Vologda Region

Founded 1992: 166,400ha

Objectives of the National Park

- Protection of the natural and historical complexes, and reconstruction of the damaged ones
- Promotion of ecological tourism
- Education in ecology
- Ecological monitoring and research
- Development of scientific methods for the preservation of natural and historical heritage
- Re-introduction and promotion of traditional folk crafts and arts

Organisational structure of the park

Developing a management plan for National Park ‘Russia North’

Project Goal

- *To develop a real concrete leading co-ordinating document for the national park for:*
- 24. Optimization of all directions of park’s activity
- 25. Identify of priority tasks
- 26. Park “fixing” to the local system of making decisions

- Optimization of budgeting and fund-raising

Ministry of Natural Resources

Regional Committee

National Park 'Russian North' Academic and Technical Council Co-ordinating Council (*regional*)

Rangers Forest Department

Ecological Education Department Finance Department

Tourism Department Research Department

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Objectives

- Examine the current condition of all areas of the park activity
- Disclosing conflicts and search solution ways
- Search of «growth points»
- Financing reorganizing
- Activation of the park work
- “Team” establishing
- External relations optimization
- Internal management optimization

Management plan structure

- Introduction
- Summary
- Contents
- Main data on the National Park
- Natural and historic-cultural features
- Socio-economic conditions and nature use
- National Park management
- Zonation Plan
- Action plan
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Operational plan for the 1st year of implementation
- Annexes

Stakeholder participation

Participation is the involvement of various interest groups in the planning, decision making and management of the territory within a National Park.

It also may include the sharing of costs and benefits resulting from management activities.

Negative impacts of a national park

- More beaurocracy
- New limitations

Beneficial impacts of a national park

- The exclusion of outsiders
- Economic opportunities
- Additional (federal) financing

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Identifying stakeholders

Primary stakeholders

- *Are directly involved in the (both de jure and de facto) management of the land within the national park*

7. Farmers and other resource users, local community
8. National parks authority
9. Others

Secondary stakeholders

- Institutional Stakeholders...

(scientists, government agencies dealing directly (water, wildlife, roads etc.) and indirectly (health, education etc.) with park management issues)

- Commercial Sector Interests
- Visitors
- Political interests

Tertiary stakeholders

- *Are not directly involved in any particular National Park*
- various non governmental organisations, public movements, donors etc. who have a temporary or distant interest in the development and conservation of National Parks

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09: Summary

- Identify the '**must**' in the plan...
- what do you want to do?
- what can you do?
- what **must** you do?

27. Break the management plan into more **easily manageable sections**

28. Be **realistic** – can your goals really be achieved?... don't try to do too much

29. Make your management plan **specific and not general**

30. Maintain **direction** – what will you do next?

31. **Do not make assumptions** and confirm the knowledge that you *think* you have

32. **Do not take the easy option** – you must make progress in the problem areas – the 'old way' might not be the best way

33. **Be patient** and understand that the process is lengthy – immediate solutions and progress is unlikely

34. When in dialogue with stakeholders **do not lie**, do not pretend you have all of the answers – agree on the problem and try to agree on the answer

35. **Stakeholder perception** of an issue is (probably) different to yours – their perception is their reality perceptions are based on emotion, values and judgement – not evidence, but this does not mean that perceptions are not important – perceptions will be a big obstacle

36. **Communicate well** with stakeholders – you must understand them and their perceptions and motivations, remember...

37. to consider both sides – the *science* and the *emotion*

38. to work between these extremes

39. do not intellectualise everything – be pragmatic

40. what works and repeat it where appropriate

- Make **full use of information** that you have

41. Ask yourself if you have enough information – in the beginning the answer is probably no

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10: Points for Consideration

For the future...

- An update of the Eurosite Management Planning Toolkit, including the creation of a concise 'sister document' that can be used as an easily digestible working document for the creation of a management plan
- a 'step by step' document walking you through the basics of

management planning

- including the identification of defined stages in the management planning process – *monitoring*
- Progress
- Monitoring – *what, how, when...*
- Reporting – *what, how, when...*

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Appendix A

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