



Short description of the project

Objective: Strengthening and improving the administrative capacity for harmonizing and implementation of the EU nature protection acquis.

Purpose: Strengthening and improving administrative capacities of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning/Administration of Environment for implementation of the EU nature protection acquis, through development of legislation, provision of training and implementation of EU Nature Protection legislation as a Birds and Habitat Directives and Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora.

Beneficiary: Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MOEPP).

Relevant **stakeholders for Natura 2000:** Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy, Public Institution for pastures and National Forests, National Parks and other protected areas, NGOs, State Inspectorates for environment, forestry and hunting, Academia, landowners and land users, the touristic sector, the hunting and fishing sector, in cooperation with the EU Delegation in North Macedonia.

Relevant **stakeholders for CITES:** Food and Veterinary Agency, Administration for Phytosanitary Health, Customs Administration, Border Police, State Inspectorates, Academia, in cooperation with the EU Delegation in North Macedonia and others.

Implementing consortium: NIRAS IC (lead) with partners: Macedonian Ecological Society (MES), FARMAHEM Doel, Stitching Birdlife Europe, Polish Society for protection of Birds, EFTAS Remote Sensing and Transfer of Technologies.

North Macedonia is preparing to implement the EU Directives on nature protection (Habitats Directive and Birds Directive) as well as the CITES regulation on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Project results will be discussed with stakeholders to ensure successful implementation.

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The main goals of the project:

1. Natura 2000 component:
 - i. Assessment and preparation of draft Standard Data Forms for potential Natura 2000 sites in the whole country
 - ii. Capacity building and public awareness program for implementation of Natura 2000 network
2. CITES component:
 - i. Preparation of Primary legislation aligned with CITES - the Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 including related software development
 - ii. Capacity building and public awareness program for CITES regulation

Main part in the Natura 2000 component is field work in the whole country for assessment of more than 20 potential sites. Field work will be supported with remote sensing data and a specific web-based GIS software to properly manage data about habitats and species. For strengthening the administrative capacity, trainings and workshops will be organized. Additionally, a program for public information about Natura 2000 will be provided.

The objective of the CITES component is achievement of full harmonization of national legislation with the EU CITES Regulation and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. This will be done through the compliance checking of existing legal acts regulating nature protection and development of new/revised legislation. A special software for issuing permits of trade will be programmed.

Based on an analysis of current capacities and by integration of the EU best practices, capacity building measures will be covered by the project through a training programme.

Duration: 1st June 2022 – 1st December 2024 (30 months)

