**Roles and impacts of non-governmental organizations in Natura 2000 implementation in Hungary and Poland**

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**APPENDIX 1**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

**Introduction**

Before the interview respondents were presented with the topics of the study and general rules of interview (a request for elaborated and honest opinion, confidentiality agreements and permission to record the interview). In Poland, in 2006 the interviews were taken as a part of a larger research project, therefore introduction included following topics: motivation of volunteers, the role of volunteers in research conducted by NGOs, relevance of NGOs studies for monitoring of N2000 sites, and the role of NGOs in implementation of N2000. Interviews conducted in Poland in 2010 considered solely the study presented hereby, therefore respondents were introduced to the following topics: the N2000 implementation process, the role of NGOs and other actors in the implementation of N2000, and their opinions on the role of N2000 in supporting nature conservation in Poland. In Hungary, the interviews were conducted as part of the GoverNat project, which focused on participation in multi-level governance of biodiversity in Europe. Therefore an emphasis was put on interactions between different actors and levels of governance, and also the general setting of nature conservation in Hungary. On average, interviews lasted between 60 and 120 minutes.

**The list of topics and questions**

The list presented below includes only the questions analysed in this paper. Questions asked only in Hungary (HU) or Poland (PL) are indicated accordingly.

*Person*

* How long have you worked here?
* What did you do before?
* What did you study?
* How does your work relate to N2000?

*Nature conservation in Hungary*

* Why according to you is nature conservation important? What are the reasons for nature conservation? (HU)
* Who are the main actors in nature conservation? (HU)
* What role do other sectors, like agriculture or forestry, play in nature conservation (positive and negative aspects)? (HU)
* What interactions are there between different sectors? (HU)
* What is the role of the EU in nature conservation / public participation (Aarhus Convention?) / engagement of NGOs in nature conservation? Have there been any changes since or due to accession? (HU)

*Nature conservation actors involved in N2000 implementation*

* Who are the main actors in implementation of N2000? Which departments of state agencies are engaged in the process? [if not mentioned, detailed questions about the role of ministries of environment, agriculture, and the state forest organization]
* What is the role of NGOs in nature conservation in general? (HU)
* Which are the most important nature conservation NGOs for N2000?
* How influential are they?
* With whom do they interact? (on national, European, local or regional levels)
* How is your NGO engaged in N2000 implementation? (describe actions)
* Why did your NGO engage in the N2000 implementation?
* Did you or your organization participate in the biogeographical seminar? What was your / your organization’s role? (PL)
* Who do you cooperate with concerning N2000? (other NGOs or state agencies, on national, European, local or regional level?)
* How do you interact with these actors (action, exchange of information and expertize)? What shapes this interaction (what made it easier or more difficult)? How has this changed during recent years? Which factors influenced this cooperation? How did your NGO benefit from cooperation? How did other actors benefit? (PL)

*N2000 implementation process*

* When did the implementation of N2000 start? What preparations were undertaken before EU accession?
* What were the main stages of the process?
* How did the change of the government influence N2000 implementation? (PL)
* How has the establishment of the GDEP influenced the implementation of N2000? (PL)
* Why was the [NGO] N2000 working group founded in Hungary? (Aarhus Convention?) Who initiated it? What was the role of the N2000 working group in Hungary? (beginning) How does the working group interact with the ministry? (how often do they meet) What was the role of the working group today? (implementation, writing of management plans) (HU)
* What were the main challenges with N2000 implementation in the initial years?
* Which problems have been solved, which are still present?
* Was it possible to use experiences from the old member states in creating the N2000 network?
* What conflicts emerged during N2000 implementation? Which actors were engaged in the conflicts? Were they visible to a broader public? What were the reasons for conflicts? How were they solved or mitigated? (PL)
* What would the N2000 network look like if NGOs had not engaged in the implementation process? (PL)

*Evaluation of N2000*

* What is the role of the N2000 programme in nature conservation? How important is N2000 for successful conservation of nature?
* How did the implementation of N2000 influence acceptance of nature conservation?
* Did the implementation of N2000 change opportunities for participation of civil society in nature conservation?
* What have you learned in the process of implementing N2000?
* How has the process influenced interactions and relations between different stakeholders?
* How would you evaluate the designation of N2000 sites?
* What are the main future challenges to be met in N2000 implementation (site management and maintenance)?
* What would be the role of NGOs in the management of N2000 sites?