

## BEST PRACTICE PRESENTATION



Basque Government – Directorate of Biodiversity  
and Environmental Participation

### **PARTICIPATIVE PROCESS IN ESTABLISHING CONSERVACION MEASURES FOR A SAC, WITH EMPHASIS IN AGRICULTURE**

**Partners involved:** 9 Town Councils, Rural and  
Regional Development Associations, farmers,  
forest owners, others

## Background of the action (1)

### REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

**Directive on Habitats**: obligation to identify Special Conservation Areas, along with the conservation measures responding to the ecological demands of natural habitat types included in Annex I and of species included in Annex II and present in those places (Articles 4.4. and 6.1).

**Aarhus Convention**: Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters, transposed to the Spanish legal system in Law 27/2006.

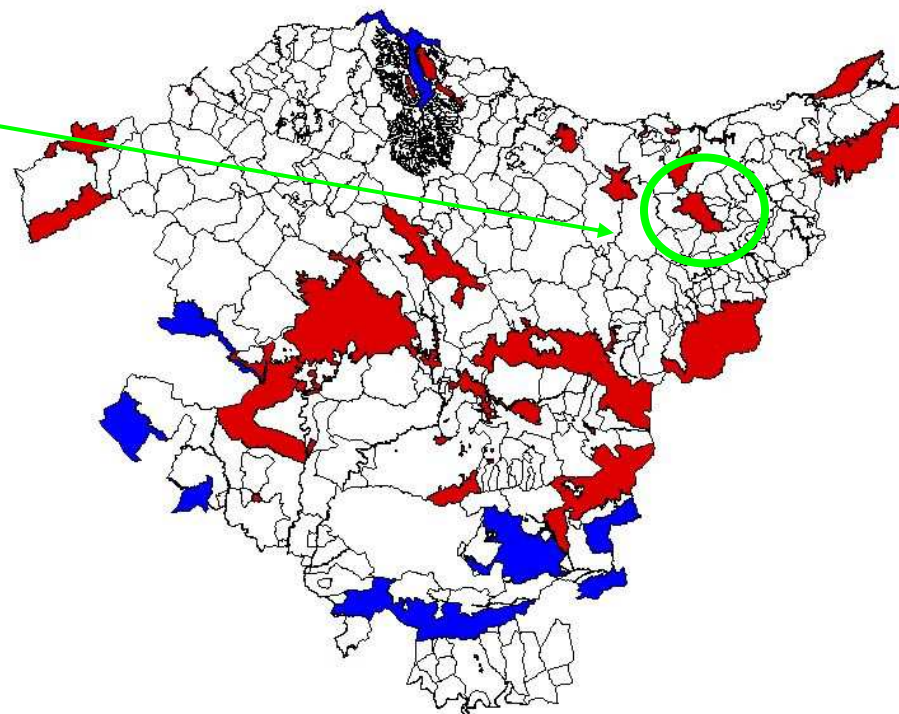
**White Paper on Governance** COM (2001) 428 final



## Background of the action (2)

### Context of the space NATURA 2000 of ERNIO-GATZUME:

- **Surface:** 2,158 ha.
- Historic Territory of Gipuzkoa
- Atlantic Biogeographical Region
- 96% of the surface is private
- **Main values:** forests (beech, oak, riparian forests); grasslands and brushwood; caves; saproxylic fauna; chiroptera and birds of prey



## Background of the action (2)



## GOALS

- 1) Inform the local population directly on the management measures, its justification and the expected results.
- 2) Consult directly with owners and users to incorporate the perspectives and expectations of local communities in management solutions.
- 3) Identify social factors and agents that may hinder the implementation and success of the plan.
- 4) Identify individuals or groups that can promote the development of the plan.
- 5) Decide jointly, as far as possible.
- 6) Facilitate the active involvement of stakeholders in the management of the site (joint management).

## TARGETS

- 1) Local communities know the values that justify the designation of the place and measures needed for conservation
- 2) Local proposals that improve the odds of success of management measures are included.
- 3) measures to gain support or reduce opposition to the Plan are included.
- 4) Local actors show their support to the Plan and as consequence they get achievements for the development of the Plan.
- 5) It includes measures to achieve management and conservation agreements.
- 6) Effective forums are proposed for the participation of local communities in monitoring the plan.

## METHODOLOGY (1)

### PROCESS STAGES

**1.- Identification of actors** and creation of participant databases after detecting possible actors (specially groups, development agencies, Town Councils, etc.)

**2.- Interviews** with potential opinion leaders and creation of focus groups: agricultural and social development agencies and sessions at Town Councils. The objectives of these interviews are:

- ✓ Request information or opinions about the process.
- ✓ Obtain valuable information for social participation: problem forecast, obtaining contact details of people that may be interested in the process, diagnostic of existing conservation experiences...
- ✓ Analyse expectations, priorities, and detect weak points and possible threats.
- ✓ Obtain information to draw up an informative document on frequently asked questions and doubts about Natura 2000.
- ✓ Gain the support of the process from these institutions.

## METHODOLOGY (2)

### PROCESS STAGES

**3.- Introduction** to all interested actors of the characteristics of space and explanation of the process of participation:

- Customized delivery of call (Note the work done by the councils themselves to inform their neighbours of the beginning of this process.)
- MASS MEDIA IS NOT USED. It should be a diffusion lined with local realities (municipal boards, rotating from house to house ...)
- PPT providing information about Natura 2000, focused on specific values of the space and on the development of participation process.
- FAQ Document.
- Registration records of stakeholders in the process (participation is always voluntary).

**4.- Thematic workshops** for the identification of problems and proposals for action:

- Target group: farmers, forestry and tertiary-use (hunters, hikers, environmentalists, rural tourism, etc)
- From a summary document (in plain language) of targets and measures.

## METHODOLOGY (3)

### PROCESS STAGES

5.- Formal **public exhibition** and declaration period

6.- **End of the participation process** with participants

- Presentation of final measures and justification of non-included proposals.
- End of the process.

7.- Drawing up of the **final informative document**

**HUMAN RESOURCES:** 3 experts in participation process, with the support of experts who make the technical documents

**PERMANENT WEBSITE FOR PARTICIPATION:** [www.euskadi.net/natura2000](http://www.euskadi.net/natura2000)

**FINANCIAL RESOURCES:** approx. €12,000 (within the general contract)



## EVALUATION OF THE ACTION

### METHODS AND TOOLS

#### Evaluation criteria:

- ❖ Continuous monitoring of the process through internal communication with the Directorate of Biodiversity and Environmental Participation to analyse the results of the sessions, number of attendants, number of enquiries, characteristics of the enquiries, etc.
- ❖ Internal meetings between the dynamizing team and the planning team
- ❖ Monitoring and evaluation of focus groups, if it is the case
- ❖ Evaluation of target groups

**Specific actions:** After each session to be held with the target groups, development of a dynamic activity called “Las Dianas” (The Dartboards), through which participants will evaluate the basic issues of the session from 1 to 4 (1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest). Issues to be evaluated:

- Organisation and duration of the session
- Used material resources
- Used human resources
- Working methodology
- Satisfaction regarding the work done during the session



## TEACHINGS OF THE ACTION



- Although having a previous methodological scheme, each process is a different reality. It must be adapted.
  - Processes are unpredictable and, thus, it must be possible to incorporate new possibilities to face new demands.
  - Different levels of participation must be distinguished (municipal, social)
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- There are not many interesting contributions for the technical team; however, the communication value of the process is very high.
  - The main addresses of processes must be people that work in the area or those people whose activity is affected by space management.

## RESULTS

- A total of 63 people have attended the presentations; 47 people have attended the sector workshops.
- Very different profiles, mainly livestock and forest owners and hunters. To a smaller extent, hikers and mountaineers. Total absence of the tourist sector and ecological groups.
- A total of 24 contributions to the same number of technical measures have been made from the forum.
- A total of 7 added suggestions



## RESULTS

### Examples of contributions to a measure:

Directive: Proceedings for regeneration or control the bush or grassland restoration shall be done by clearing, which will preferentially focused on areas where maintenance can be ensured by the pasture stocking or those in which there is a threat colonization by species of trees. The clearings must be made so that:

- Do not affect an area bigger than 1ha, and that the bushes do not decrease below 30%.
- Keep small patches of uncleared irregular shape.

### Contributions made:

"It is unable to clear as indicated in this directive. An owner may have a lot of weed while another may have little. The one who has a lot may have to remove more than 1ha but does not have to remove anywhere else. It is proposed that instead of citing proportions and surfaces, there should be written something like the following: the weeds will be eliminated in a planned, by agreement "

## RESULTS

### Example of added suggestions:

- To make people know the Plan, it would be required a great communication campaign.
- If the owner must put into practise the measures, it will require specific and complete financial aid needed to cover expenses. If the measures are put into practise by the county council, that council will decide how to do it or which means will be available to carry out "
- Aids for Sustainable Rural Development are very limited, the financial contribution will be increased if financings are needed to carry out everything we want to do.

## FOLLOW UP

### What are the future actions?

We must go forward in design and implementation of stable and effective participation bodies, which contribute to a real implementation of the measures for their evaluation and, finally, to the management of the Natura 2000 Network.

### What could you improve?

We must improve participants' training in this kind of process. Although participation can be considered high, it is necessary to continue carrying out actions to attract more people.

## CONCLUSION

**The best process is the one that adapts to the situation from the beginning and promotes its development through learning, towards more complex and rich processes in the future.**

