

The projected Natura 2000 network in Poland: a need for supplementing the governmental list of proposed sites of community importance

Malgorzata Makomaska-Juchiewicz, Stanisław Tworek

Institute of Nature Conservation, Polish Academy of Sciences
Mickiewicza 33, 31-120 Kraków, e-mail: biodiver@iop.krakow.pl

Abstract

The experts' proposal for Sites of Community Importance (pSCI) to the Polish Natura 2000 network have been confronted with the governmental list of these sites, submitted to the European Commission before 1st May 2004. The authors have analyzed the consequences of the reduced number and area of sites in the governmental list for achieving the Natura 2000 network goals and discussed possible reasons for this reduction. In the governmental proposal there are no sites for the conservation of 11 species with a current, documented and permanent occurrence in Poland, nor sites covering the strongest or fairly strong populations of many species. The overall number of sites proposed for conservation of specific habitat types or species has also been reduced significantly. Also notable is the great reduction in habitats and species associated with river valleys and large forest complexes. The main reasons behind such a modest proposal of pSCIs submitted by the Polish government is, above all, the lack of social acceptance for Natura 2000, due to ill-defined principles for its financing, the resistance from certain interest groups, and – partly – the concept adopted by experts which has consisted of designating relatively large areas, which have not been protected to date, or only under less stringent forms of protection. Presented is the list of pSCIs which should be added to the national list to improve the coverage of natural habitat types and species of national importance, with a short justification for each addition.

Key words

Natura 2000, pSCIs, experts' proposal, governmental proposal, "shadow" list, ecological network, protected areas, Poland.