



European  
Commission



E U R O P E A N  
NATURA 2000  
AWARD  
2020

Get the recognition you deserve!



# European Natura 2000 Award

**This pan-European Award recognises excellence in the management of Natura 2000 sites and conservation achievements, showcasing the added value for local economies, and increasing public awareness of Europe's valuable natural heritage.**

Despite the benefits provided by the Natura 2000 network, many people have never even heard of it. This is why, in 2014, the European Commission launched the European Natura 2000 Award. The aim of the award is to demonstrate what the network is, what it does to preserve Europe's biodiversity, and how it benefits all of us.

Anyone directly involved in Natura 2000 — businesses, authorities, NGOs, volunteers, land owners, educational institutions and individuals — can apply for the award. Applications are assessed by a team of independent experts. The winners are decided upon by a high-level jury including representatives from the EU institutions and other organisations active in the field of nature conservation. In addition, the EU public can vote on the finalists thus selecting the winner of the EU Citizens' Award.

The finalists are invited to a high-level ceremony in Brussels when the five category winners as well as the winner of the EU Citizens' Award are announced and receive their trophies.

*Please check the Award website for the dates of the application period. The Award Ceremony takes place on or around: 21 May.*



# Awards

Winners of the European Natura 2000 Award are selected from five different categories, showcasing the best success stories in preserving Europe's stunning nature.

## Conservation

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This award recognises achievements that have improved the conservation status of a particular natural habitat type and / or species. Targeted habitat types or species must be in the Habitats Directive Annex I or II or Birds Directive Annex I, or be a regularly occurring migratory bird. Applications presenting successes in created or improved

connections and corridors between sites in the Natura 2000 network are also welcome, as they respond to an important concern for the implementation of Natura 2000.

## Communication

This award recognises communication achievements that have led to increased awareness about Natura 2000, and which have brought lasting positive changes in attitudes or behaviour towards the network. Applications in this category must be targeted at specific Natura 2000 sites. If an application addresses multiple sites or the whole Natura 2000 network by targeting a whole interest group or the general public, it must nevertheless show a tangible positive impact on at least one Natura 2000 site.



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## Socio-economic benefits

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This award recognises the creation of socio-economic benefits for local stakeholders that have come about as a result of activities linked to a Natura 2000 site or project. Examples of such achievements could include introduction of the Natura 2000 label which supported local producers in using the natural resources of the site

to create a niche market or obtain better prices, nature-based tourism activities which have been developed around a Natura 2000 site, etc.

## Reconciling interests / perceptions

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This category rewards successful conflict-resolution efforts that have brought together different socio-economic or political forces, or land or resource users, in a way that has benefitted Natura 2000. Applications should focus on an evolution from a polarised situation to an honourable compromise, with mechanisms in place for the various stakeholders to work together.

## Cross-border cooperation and networking

This category concerns the establishment of effective partnerships between stakeholders involved in the management / conservation of Natura 2000 sites that are aimed at resolving Natura 2000 issues more constructively than would have been the case if the partners had operated individually.



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Two types of partnerships are covered by this category:

1. Cross-border collaboration in order to achieve the better conservation of a species / habitat type whose geographic distribution requires such an approach. Cross-border cooperation may be between countries or self-governing regions in a federal state (such as Germany, Belgium, Austria, Spain). It can also include the transfer of knowledge / best practice in the explicit framework of a biogeographic region.
2. Networking among structures with similar thematic targets (e.g., wetland Natura 2000 sites, managers of Natura 2000 sites) within the same country (or same region for federal countries).

## Citizens' Award

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In addition to the five category winners, the public has the chance to vote online for their favourite finalist application. The finalist receiving the most votes is rewarded with the "European Citizens' Award".

# The Natura 2000 network

Natura 2000 is the European Union network of protected areas. It consists of an enormous variety of different sites across the continent, aiming to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species, safeguarding them for future generations. It also provides a wide range of products and services beneficial to society and the economy.



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## Facts and figures about Natura 2000

Despite its small size, Europe hosts an amazing diversity of wild plants, animals and landscapes, many of which are found nowhere else in the world.

However, Europe's biodiversity is under threat. Natural ecosystems and their vital services are under pressure from urban sprawl, intensive agriculture, pollution, invasive species and climate change.

The Natura 2000 network is founded on two pioneering pieces of EU legislation – the 1979 Birds Directive and the 1992 Habitats Directive – and plays an essential role in halting biodiversity loss in the EU. Today the network, one of the EU's outstanding achievements, consists of over 27 800 terrestrial and marine sites, covering more than 18% of Europe's land and over 9.5% of the surrounding seas, across nine biogeographic regions.

Although the network also includes strictly protected nature reserves, Natura 2000 embraces a much wider concept of conservation and compatible use which is largely centred on people working with nature. Since every site is unique, the emphasis is on finding local solutions to local management issues in close cooperation with landowners, stakeholders, local authorities and any other interested parties.

Natura 2000 is also a valuable economic asset. The socio-economic benefits that flow from the network have been estimated to be in the region of €200 to €300 billion per year.

Additional information on Natura 2000 is available at:

[i http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature)

## Further information on the Natura 2000 Award

Please visit the website:

[ⓘ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/)

and sign up for the newsletter.

The Natura 2000 Award Secretariat is operated by adelphi, Tipik Communication Agency, Ecosystems Ltd and EUROPARC FEDERATION on behalf of the European Commission, DG Environment. For further information, please contact:

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