

Preface

The *Eurosite* network has long been known for its practical approach towards solving the problems which face modern site managers. Early in the development of the network, management planning was recognised as an important skill and guidance was developed in the best *Eurosite* tradition – from the ground up.

The guidance has lasted the network well and is now used in many European countries. It is translated into many European languages. However, today's environment has changed considerably since the first management planning working group met to exchange the ideas and experience which became the building blocks for an effective management plan. For example, the European Union Habitats Directive and the Biodiversity Convention have evolved in recent years and they recognise the importance of people who have an interest in or are affected by the management plan process.

With all these factors in mind, a new group was established with the task of revising the guidance so that European natural site managers would continue to benefit from a common approach to management planning.

The building blocks of the plan are still there, but they have been improved in the light of experience and are now easier to fit together.

I hope that you find the array of tools in this management planning toolkit easy to use, useful and relevant to your work in nature conservation. Above all, please let us in *Eurosite* know which parts do not work or could benefit from further improvement. Without your direct input and without your help *Eurosite's* guidance will lose its dynamism and its relevance.

Good luck with your management plan and remember that what counts are the results on site!

E. T. Idle
President

The European network of site management organisations

Throughout Europe, many organisations share the daily responsibility for the important and difficult task of managing land and water for nature conservation. They rely upon the sound knowledge, experience and professionalism of site managers. *Eurosite*, a truly European, independent network, is actively committed to providing an international forum for bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation between nature conservation managers so that good practice in land and water management for nature conservation can be shared around Europe. *Eurosite* has been in existence for over 10 years and now unites more than 70 nature conservation management organisations, from all parts of Europe, public and private, large and small, active at the national, regional or local level. *Eurosite* manages four different programmes:

Workshop & Training Managers of natural areas often work in isolation. Sometimes they need to get together to experience a different perspective and to find out about the experience of others in different countries. *Eurosite* offers the opportunity for this to happen through its Workshop and Training Programme, dealing with key nature conservation management issues. Each year 8 or 10 European workshops are organised on a wide variety of themes.

Natural Site Twinning A *Eurosite* twinning is a flexible tool for bilateral exchange of information between member organisations throughout Europe. A Memorandum of Agreement identifies how the organisations will cooperate over 3 or 4 years and what problems and research they will examine. A *Eurosite* Guide on how to manage a twinning is available in English and French.

Communication *Eurosite Information* is regularly published, to inform members about the work of the organisation, the activities of other member organisations and relevant European issues. Every two years, *Eurosite* runs an award scheme to recognise and promote good examples of international cooperation in nature management. *Eurosite* has recently established its presence on the internet. For summary information about the network and its work, visit www.eurosite-nature.org In time, the website will be used to promote interactive exchanges of natural site management between managers.

'Special Projects' Partnerships between members with a common interest are encouraged through 'Special Projects'. For example, through its members, *Eurosite* is involved in the transfer of knowledge and exchange of experience between site managers through a 3 year Action Programme with the Danone Corporate Group to contribute to the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. It began in 1998 and the main objective is information transfer through the creation of biogeographical networks of twinned Ramsar sites within 2 networks covering the East Atlantic, and Deltas in the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea.

Eurosite has also developed good links with nature conservation organisations in **Central and Eastern Europe**, by organising specific training workshops, and an exchange programme with Western Europe.

Eurosite membership

The network brings you into contact with fellow nature managers across Europe, enabling you to share expertise, knowledge and practical experience. *Eurosite* members receive:

- *Eurosite Information* 3 times per year
- a copy of *Who is Who in Eurosite*,
- a copy of each *Eurosite* technical publication
- a free subscription to "*enact* magazine", English Nature's leading publication in the field of nature conservation management techniques
- a reduced registration fee for the workshops and the exclusive opportunity to apply for bursaries

Foreword

The objective of the *Eurosite Working Group on Management Planning (1998/1999)* was to revise the existing *Eurosite 'European Guide for the Preparation of Management Plans for protected and managed natural and semi-natural areas'* first published in 1992 and revised in 1996. The continuing purpose of the guidance is to provide an effective planning tool for managers to help them improve the management of natural sites. This should lead to clarity of purpose and hence wildlife gain, sustainable development, and better trained managers. The intention of all *Eurosite Working Groups* is to 'foster European-wide standards' and the preparation of standard guidelines for the preparation of site management plans is an essential aspect of that process.

Since 1992 *Eurosite's* management plan guidelines have been used on many different sites, in at least thirteen countries, all over Europe. Consequently, they have evolved over time, benefiting from field experience and have incorporated site manager needs. In 1997 at the third *Eurosite/Matra* workshop in Kiskunsag National Park in Hungary, many of these ideas and experiences were brought together and that work is reflected here.

The ongoing identification and designation of sites within the European Union Natura 2000 network by member states "contributes towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna". The network sites have to be maintained and where habitats have deteriorated or there is disturbance to priority species, they have to be restored. The Directive also requires Member States to implement a process which takes account of "economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics" as part of the requirement to achieve favourable conservation status. This can be effectively achieved by preparing management plans. The new *Eurosite* format enables this to be met to a common and uniform standard.

This revision is a complete reworking and replaces all previous versions - "*Introduction to Site Management Plans, the Need for Management Planning*", "*A Format for a Site Management Plan*" and "*The European Guide for the Preparation of Management Plans*". The guidance now takes the form of an 8 section, comprehensive integrated package for practical management planning: *The Eurosite Toolkit*.

This folder includes guidance on why planning is needed, the procedure for plan production, guidance on plan production, auditing, training needs and practical examples of good practice. The heart of the package remains the specification of the management planning format which is applicable to the management of any natural site or area whatever the geographical context.

I have been privileged to chair two sessions of the *Eurosite* working group that undertook this revision, and to have a hand in preparing and editing the text, building on the earlier work guided by Peter Schofield.

I am sure that through adopting and using this new integrated package there will be real benefit to natural sites throughout Europe through improved quality management.

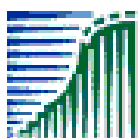
Dr T J Bines
Canterbury
1999

Acknowledgments

Thanks are due to all the site managers in Europe who have in recent years contributed to the development of the *Eurosite* Management Plan Guidelines, either through their contribution to the working groups, or through using and refining the guidelines on their natural sites.

This revision of the guidelines would not have been possible without the wise guidance and support of Eddie Idle (President of *Eurosite*), advice from Peter Schofield (*Honorary Vice President, Eurosite*) and the continuing enthusiasm and encouragement of Nicole Nowicki-Caupin (Director General, *Eurosite*). Many thanks go to all the working group members whose collected experience is reflected in the guidance: Philip Eckersley (*Eurosite*), Jac Hendriks (*Staatsbosbeheer, Netherlands*), Judit Kelemen (*National Parks and Wildlife Service, Ireland*), Deli Saavedra (*Parc Natural dels Aiguamols de l'Emporda, Spain*), Breda Ogorelec and Dr Gordana Beltram (*Ministry of the Environment and Physical Planning, Slovenia*), Jean-Marc Sinnassamy (*Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat, France*) and Patrick Warner (*National Parks and Wildlife Service, Ireland*).

The revision of the *Eurosite* management plan has been made possible through the financial assistance of the Netherlands Government through the PIN Matra Programme and through English Nature's European project.



landbouw, natuurbeheer
en visserij



How to use the *Eurosite* Management Planning Toolkit

The management planning toolkit has been designed in a modular way and is housed in an easy to use ring binder so that managers are able to make the easiest and most efficient use of the guidance and keep it up to date. There are six stand-alone sections. If you are new to management planning, read sections 1, 2 and 3. More experienced managers may want to pick and choose and go straight to the format itself (section 3) or learn how their sites can benefit from an external audit (section 4).

Section 1 Why plan?

Essential reading for newcomers to management planning. If you are not convinced of the value of management planning for your site or if you need to rehearse the arguments to convince someone else in your organisation, read this section.

Section 2 How to plan

Once you are convinced, you will need to know what's involved in writing a plan so you can plan your time and finances. This section gives guidance on these broader issues.

Section 3 The *Eurosite* management planning format

Takes you step by step through the preparation of a management plan. The numbered sections in the format are the minimum essential headings under which parts need to be written for a *Eurosite* management plan. It may not be necessary to include information under each heading for every management plan written using the format, but it is essential to consider each one in order to devise as an objective a plan as possible.

Other parts of the framework with bullet points or un-numbered headings are for information, advice or guidance. A **Glossary** of selected, commonly used terms is included at the end of the format.

Section 4 Audit

The tried and tested *Eurosite* evaluation audit. If you have a management plan which is in the middle of its life or coming to the end, an external audit can provide useful guidance for the future.

Section 5 Training

Management planning is a skilful technique: It cannot be simply learned from a book. It may be necessary to train new staff in your organisation in the principles and practice. This section provides some guidance.

Section 6 Examples

One of the best ways to write a plan is to see how someone else did it. This section has several examples of good practice from around Europe. If you're interested in seeing these examples or other case studies in real life, contact *Eurosite* to know how to get involved through an exchange visit or twinning.

Section 7 Next Steps

This section gives advice on how to make the most of the plan once it has been produced.

Section 8 References

Essential guidance on the European Union Natura 2000 network

Section 1: Why plan?

*The need for management planning in
natural and semi-natural sites*

1. Why plan?

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1. Why plan?

1.1 Management planning: What does it mean?

In today's world, wild places need to be managed if they are to keep those particular plants, animals and natural features that together make the place special either in its uniqueness or its typicality. Both are qualities worthy of conservation. For that management to be effective, it has to be based on an understanding not just of the components of the site in terms of habitats and species, but how those components interact, the ecosystems they form, and the processes that sustain or threaten them must also be understood. In particular, management must understand past and present human usage, its current or future impact, and the means by which optimum usage can be achieved. Effective management therefore means understanding the full spectrum of measures and actions necessary to sustain the site itself and placing it positively within the community and any development that may take place in the surrounding area.

Similarly, a wide range of interests - researchers, educationalists, naturalists, those seeking informal recreation and visitors generally - need to be catered for appropriately and where appropriate. The activities of these groups must not put at risk the primary values of the site, in particular its wildlife, landforms and its sense of wilderness. Neither must they be mutually exclusive. The plan must therefore analyse these requirements and integrate the optimum situation into the day to day operation of the site. The focus of all action therefore is the well-being of the site.

1.2 What is a management plan?

“A management plan is a written, circulated and approved document which describes a site or area and the problems and opportunities for management of its nature conservation, land form or landscape features, enabling objectives based on this information to be met through relevant work over a stated period of time.”

The key aspects when preparing a plan are therefore to gain an understanding of the natural qualities of a site and how they originated, set objectives and priorities for its conservation and design a realistic plan for future management. The objectives of international and national Conventions and Directives should be incorporated in a clear and logical way into this planning framework, so that the legal obligations of these designations are met. This means that the site has to be properly understood in its context.

In management planning, the terms site and area are often used interchangeably. For convenience and to ensure consistency, site is used throughout this text.

Review of management activities is also essential. As understanding of the functioning of a site improves with time, the management plan's objectives will evolve and change. Therefore it is important to set a review period to ensure that the plan is the best available document and that it is up to date and, most importantly, used to good effect!

1.3 General requirements of a Management Plan

The main purposes of the plan are to:

- Inform all involved with the site, especially the site manager, about what is present, why it is there, why it is important or interesting, and how it should be managed
- Identify those responsible for various aspects of management
- Identify key problem areas for managers to address
- Provide continuity and a baseline against which the state of the site, or changes in policy or management, can be assessed and further strategies or plans developed and implemented
- Provide a process to review management progress
- Provide clear Health and Safety guidance for visitors and all those that work there.

1.4 Principles of Management Plan preparation

The plan should reflect a logical process from beginning to end, i.e. from the derivation of objectives to work on the ground. During this process, information about the site's natural interest, functioning and critical influencing factors are analysed.

Key information about the site is evaluated with respect to the policies of the managing organisation, taking account of any international, national or regional obligations or designations. The result should be a clear understanding of how the site can contribute to the fulfilment of the organisation's national and international objectives, whilst meeting its legal obligations.

The priorities and objectives are then identified and objectives for the site are chosen. The ideal future development of the site is formulated. Constraints are weighed: a balance between optimism and realism leads to operational objectives. In the short or medium term some operational objectives may be to remove or reduce the impact of the constraints.

The work plan is then formulated to deliver the operational objectives and action is scheduled in detail. Carrying out measures or work in the field means organising day to day operations. This can involve allocation of budgets, human resource management, health and safety issues, getting land managers involved and choosing and managing contractors.

The resources used, the work undertaken and the events on site have to be recorded to enable further evaluation. The results of undertaking management can be measured by monitoring chosen species of plants, animals and other features of the ecosystem such as groundwater levels, structure of the vegetation and biomass production or important landscape features. The list of potential parameters is very large. The key to success is to select sufficient appropriate measures of inputs and outputs so that progress can be assessed in a meaningful way.

The results of management may not be very easy to predict in the short or long term but natural and social science research can help to assess the outcome. The outcome should be measured in all instances and compared with expectations or targets, allowing any differences to be analysed and future action adjusted.

1.5 The Quality Cycle

This is a technique that improves performance over time and ensures that agreed products are delivered to a given quality at appropriate cost and on time. Any review or audit that checks on delivery needs to be carried out within a structured management system and integrated with overall management activities. Key aspects of quality control are:

- Written specifications of the results that have to be achieved (targets)
- Standard procedures for managing the process
- Clear lines of authority with delegated responsibility and accountability
- Matching of priorities and resources to deliver targets
- Reporting and providing management information through performance indicators
- Effective implementation of revised procedures.

The primary objective of a quality cycle is to seek to improve performance continuously i.e. to not only do the right things but to do them right and then do them better. A key aspect for success is the commitment of the organisation to achieve this.

Those organisations that can show effective implementation of quality management systems can look to obtain recognition under EN ISO 9000 quality standard series or more specifically for management planning purposes under the EN ISO 14000 quality standard series. In simple terms, for management planning purposes, a quality cycle consists of four parts

1. Writing a plan
2. Doing work
3. Monitoring the work
4. A review of each aspect to ensure that all parts are appropriate, realistic, efficient, economic and effective.

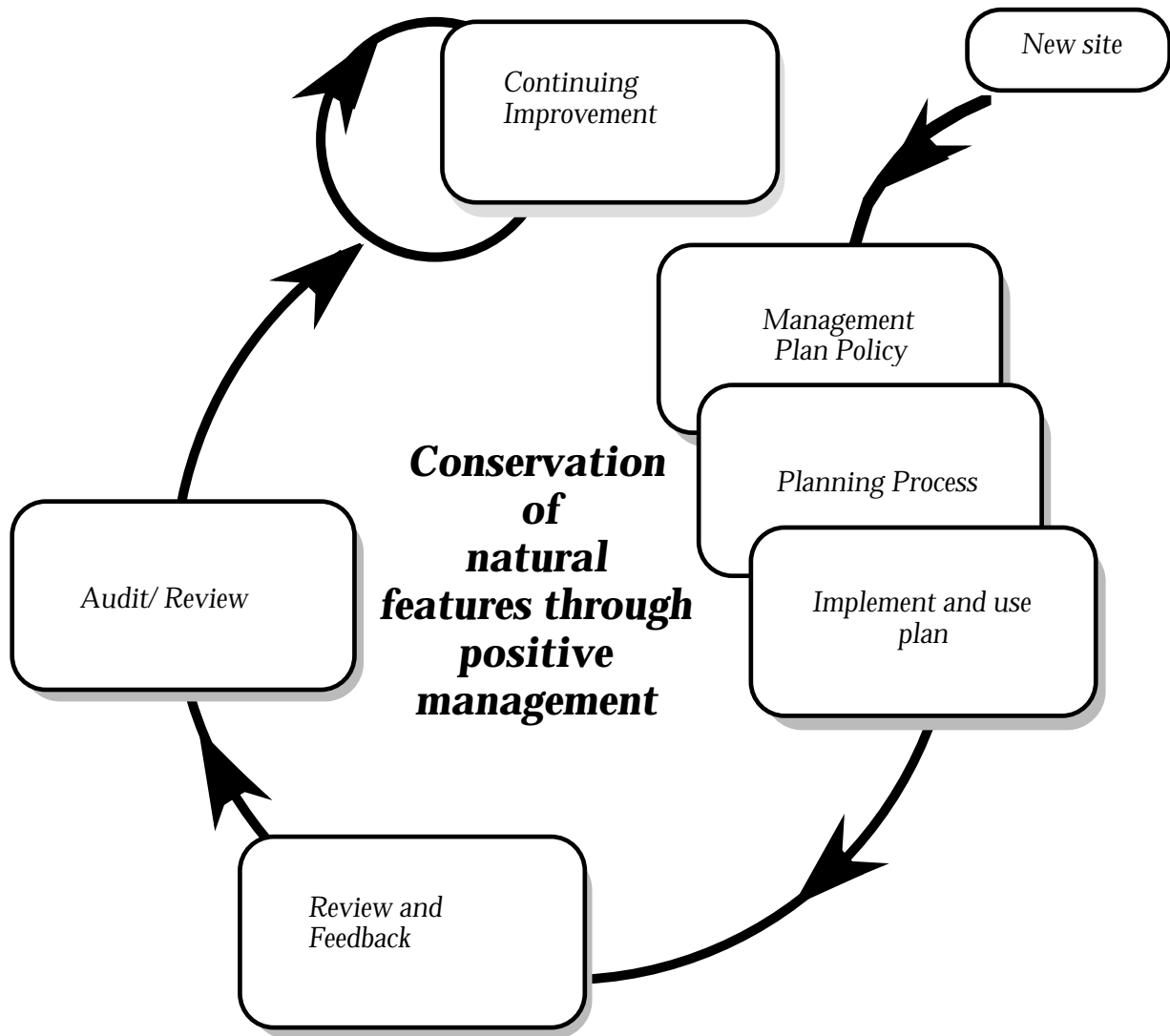
1.6 The benefits of standardisation

At a site level the standardisation of management plan layout and process allows any aspect of the management plan for different areas or sites to be compared. Objectives can be set for individual sites within a broader regional, national or European context and action can be better co-ordinated. In addition, the management planning process meets, for example, the requirements of the EU Habitats & Species Directive for Member States to maintain biodiversity whilst taking account of “economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics”. The *Eurosite* format enables this to be achieved to a common and uniform standard.

Co-ordinated management of sites could also be used to link sites belonging to one ecosystem type over a wide area e.g. wetlands. Alternatively, it could be used in the resource planning process for the management of all biotopes in a defined region, country or even between countries.

The benefits of common ways of working within and between organisations can also be realised and a range of staff can quickly gain an understanding of any site or area or an overview of a given section of the plan for a number of sites. This may for instance assist with development of research and survey programmes. A standardised format also assists the controlling organisation to determine priorities between sites when considering resource and other allocations.

The *Eurosite* Management Planning Quality Cycle



The following steps are essential parts of the planning process:

- Description of the area and the policies that affect it
- Evaluation of the components of a site
- Determination of ideal objectives for the site, including the reasoning behind each objective
- Identification of modifiers or constraints that may prevent the ideal objectives being reached (including assessment of risks)
- Developing operational objectives
- Implementation through strategies or projects
- Identification of priorities for action
- Review of progress

There is also a need for flexibility or adaptability in order to take account of different:

1. cultures and organisations
2. geographical and biological areas
3. sizes and types of sites (e.g. a large National Park or a small nature reserve)
4. objectives for and purposes of the site
5. levels of artificiality of the site

Specific plans may be required for special needs such as agriculture, forestry, education, research, or biodiversity action. These should follow the same process as site plans. Plans may be different lengths and written in different styles but should be consistent in using the main or section headings identified in the *Eurosite* Management Format. Provided the logical sequence is followed and each heading is given consideration then writers can tailor a plan to suit their needs. All plans for a given site need to cross-comply and should form a coherent management programme when viewed together.

When preparing a plan, a decision needs to be made about how confidential and/or open all parts of the plan and annexes should be. Generally, to be successfully implemented, plans need to have the widest ownership possible and should be appropriately tailored to enable this to happen. Where there are matters that are considered confidential then these should be provided to those who have authority to see them as an annex and reference made to this in the plan. Such matters may for instance cover rare species locations, tenancy arrangements or commercially sensitive information.

Section 2: How to Plan

2. How to plan

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2. How to plan

2.1 When should a plan be produced?

A plan should be prepared for a site as soon as possible either before or after designation, when passing into the hands of the managing organisation. At this crucial stage, there are opportunities that need to be taken to ensure that the site is well managed from the outset to retain and develop its interest, and prevent mistakes. In particular there are occasions when the absence of a planned series of actions may cause problems.

The preparation of a brief plan is essential and it should be submitted within the first three to six months after gaining responsibility for the site. Usually a more detailed plan is needed and this should follow within a year. In the case of complex sites or large National Parks, then a series of plans may be required to cover specific subjects or aspects in more detail, once an initial overview has been produced. This process is likely to take longer than a year.

For multi-use sites, with many stakeholders, it may be necessary to carry out an information campaign to raise awareness amongst the various interests. This is particularly needed where the site does not have strong protection. See section 2.5 concerning consultation procedures.

2.2 Why should a plan be produced?

There are several reasons why plans should be produced. These include:

- **Making clear management policy**
Those responsible for policy have decided that the ecosystems, or the flora and fauna within a site, or the geological, archaeological, historical, cultural and social aspects are important, and that they need to be managed to maintain, enhance or control them.
- **To clarify the site manager's responsibility/role**
It is important for site managers to have some kind of site management plan at an early date. There is always a danger that the production of an approved plan will be delayed until additional information is available. During this period some aspects of the site could be destroyed or their value reduced through ignorance or mismanagement. Plans should therefore be produced at an early stage. This will assist in ensuring that the site is well understood and as a result better managed from the outset with minimum risk.
- **To identify the resources and work required**
In some cases it is desirable or beneficial to produce a preliminary plan as a priority before the full plan. Such brief outline plans could for instance assist in the decision making process relating to whether or not a site is acquired, the commitments to be made, risks in management etc. The plan must identify the features of greatest importance, the objectives and priorities for action and give an outline of costs and other resource requirements. More comprehensive plans can follow when more information and experience of the site becomes available.

2.3 Who is the plan prepared for?

The plan can be prepared for a wide range of individuals or organisations. It is important to determine who the target audience is and its requirements before drafting begins.

Some of those for whom plans are prepared are:

- the Government
- the body(ies) controlling nature conservation management activities
- present and future managers
- site staff
- owners, occupiers, neighbours, statutory authorities, planners, relevant NGOs, and local socio-economic groups
- international organisations and data banks

2.4 Who should prepare the plan?

An individual should be given the responsibility and resources to produce the plan and must be accountable to a clearly identified authority. It often helps if the person responsible for plan production also has responsibility for the implementation of the plan - i.e. the site manager or director.

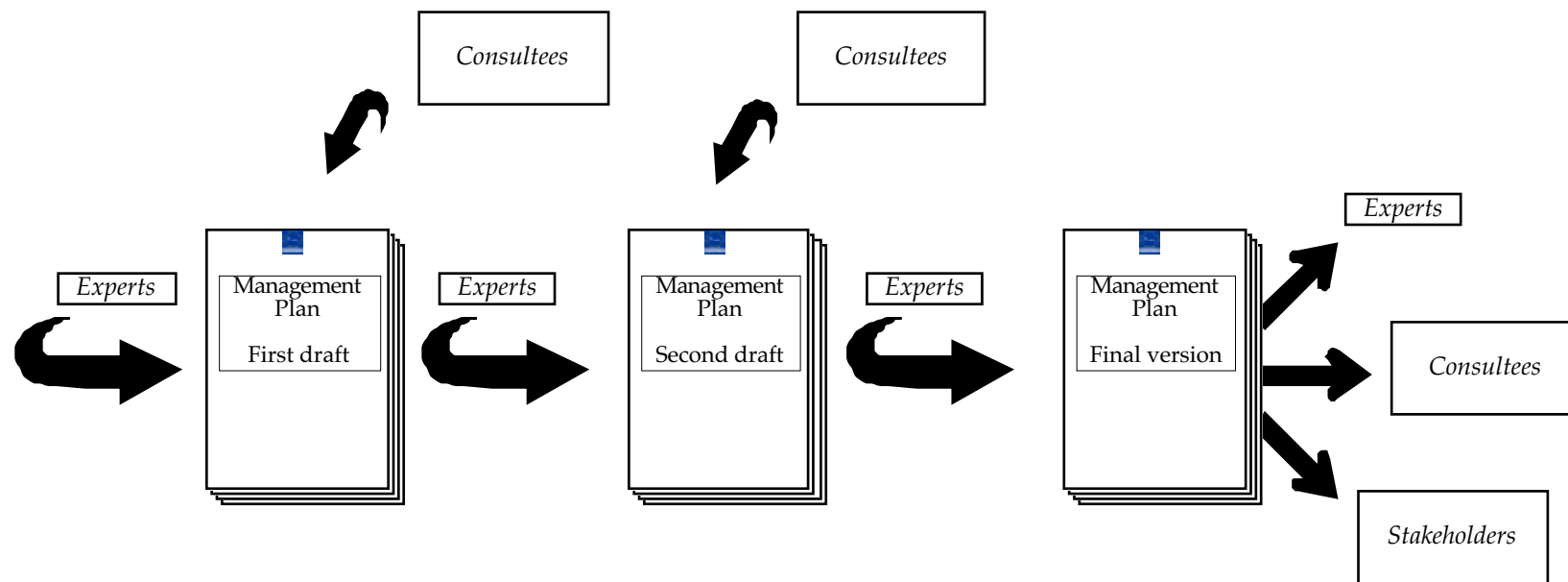
If preparation of the whole plan is contracted out, then decisions need to be made as to how the contract will be managed to ensure the plan delivers the requirements effectively. If some sections of the plan are contracted out, careful control is needed. A contracted-out plan may tap greater expertise, but its preparation in-house provides real staff development and ownership opportunities.

The plan writer may work on their own or with a group and will need to call on specialists or those with expert knowledge in many disciplines, dependant on the complexity of the site. These include:

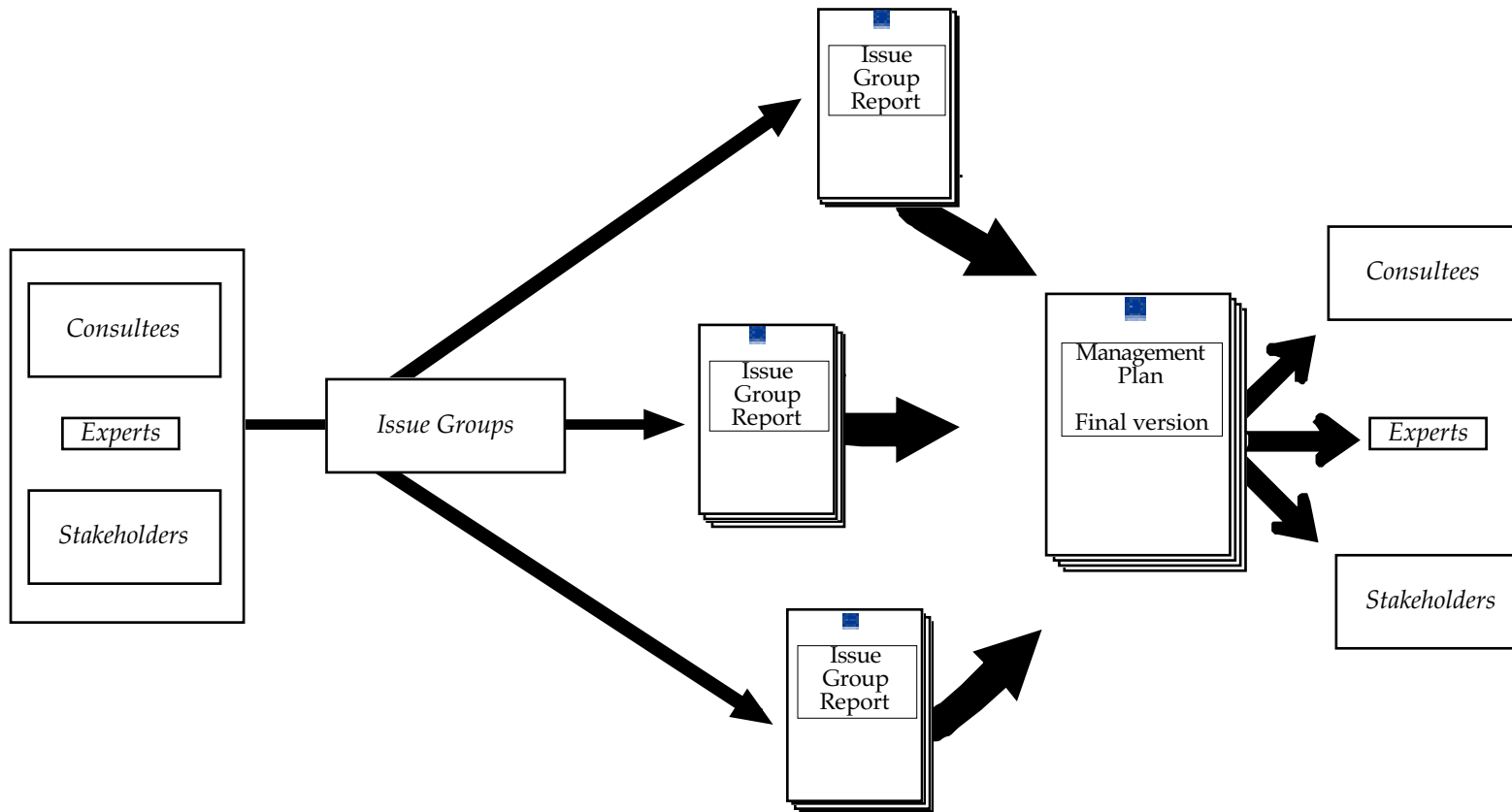
- individuals with detailed local knowledge of the site
- administrators, scientists, land agents, economists
- owners, occupiers or present users of the land, local authorities or other interested parties
- previous users/occupiers of the land, local people and neighbours
- contractors

2.5 Consultation and public participation

The plan should be the product of a partnership between all those involved rather than a document produced in isolation. Ideally it should be widely owned and at least the rationale for on-site work understood. Investing time in building up a consensus for the plan can often save time overall.



Traditional Management Plan consultation



Management Plan - Consensus building approach

Consensus building can be achieved in different ways including:

- **Consultation before drafting the plan begins.**
The form and stage of consultation depends on the specific circumstances. If there is likely to be opposition to the plan then a greater level of consensus building is more likely to lead to successful implementation. Removing the problem and areas of dispute is the first concern before working on the future management of the site. Most of the work with this approach will be giving out information and raising awareness.
- **Cooperative working during the whole drafting process.**
For instance different parts may be drafted by groups and then pieced together by the editor. This often engenders a search for common goals and cooperation and will achieve high levels of ownership amongst stakeholders.
- **Consultation following various stages of plan production.**
If there is already public interest in aspects of the plan and building up acceptance is an important aspect, then this is a useful approach. Consultation begins with the less critical aspects (like creating the inventory), and should move gradually towards the more controversial issues. There needs to be a clear understanding as to what will happen to any comments.
- **Consultation on completed draft plans**
This approach is useful in situations where people around the site are more interested in the consequences for themselves of the proposed management than in the general discussion and background to the plan. There should be a clear undertaking from those amending the plan as to the way in which comments and concerns will be handled.

An alternative is for consultation to take place during implementation, focussing on the effects and consequences of carrying through the work plan. This approach is likely only to be workable in sites without controversy.

Consultation can take several forms including:

1. Face to face meetings
2. Bilateral meetings with particular interest groups
3. An exhibition/display with site experts available to answer questions
4. Invited audiences
5. Controlled 'informal' public meetings

Confrontational meetings should be avoided especially those where the 'experts' sit on a platform above and opposite the general public. Generally, public participation aims to inform and gain acceptance of a plan. It is not to reach consensus or to compromise.

2.6 Who authorises the plan?

The level within the organisation at which the plan is authorised needs to be established and agreed. Once approved there should be a high degree of commitment by the organisation to the implementation of the plan in all respects. Therefore, the approval process is best done by those who will allocate the resources.

2.7 How should the plan be presented?

The plan must be clearly presented, succinct, capable of being used in the field and easy to refer to.

Maps often enhance a management plan and indeed may present the key elements of the whole plan. Annotated maps may for instance indicate 'what we have', 'what we want' and 'the work required to get there'. It is however essential that this short cut is not treated as the management plan process and that the cycle described here is followed.

It is useful to adopt one scale for all new maps (except the location map) to allow for comparison. Do not use a larger scale than the precision of the information presented allows or requires.

Indispensable maps include those for land ownership, land use, ecological units, and proposed or actual management units. These are supported, as appropriate, by other maps e.g. showing the infrastructure, geology, soils and hydrology. Historical maps are also useful and reference should be made to these and the perspective they bring. Zones showing strategic levels of activity or legal designations and access should be mapped.

The plan should not be seen as a definitive document, but must be readily adaptable and capable of being updated easily and efficiently, especially when parts of the plan have been implemented, as new information becomes available, or as circumstances change. However, before changes to the objectives are made they must be approved by the authorising body.

The degree of availability for public inspection and consideration also needs to be made clear from the outset.

In order to meet these aims, the plan should:

- be produced to a standardised format and order, although sections need not necessarily be prepared in order
- be assembled in a loose-leaf folder, so that additional information can be added or a section changed after revision
- have each primary section on a new page (for ease of revision)
- have a date on each section indicating when it was approved and/or revised
- have the author's name on each section
- have a detailed contents list including dates of revisions
- be concisely written with all detailed material provided in annexes. Gaps in information should be acknowledged and the information required to fill them identified
- be properly costed

2.8 How long should it take?

The time taken to prepare a plan will depend on many factors. These include the workload, experience and abilities of the author and their team; the amount of information readily available; the complexity of the socio-economic, biological and site use patterns; the amount of consultation involved; and the administrative machinery required to finance, approve and prepare the plan for appropriate publication.

Therefore, it is impossible to specify a precise duration which will apply to all situations. Provided that most information is available for the descriptive section, then the actual writing

time should not be longer than one to six months. For larger and more complex sites with a higher number of stakeholders, where little is known about the functioning of the site, the time of writing can be much longer. In exceptional cases, this can be as long as 24 months. It is important to remember that the **writing** of the plan is important, but should not replace the **process** of management planning, which has as its goal, the conservation of the site.

Bearing this principle in mind, *Eurosite* recommends the following minimum standard:

In general, a brief plan should be prepared within the first three to six months as a matter of priority. This exercise is an essential discipline for any site manager to follow for a new site.

A more detailed plan may be needed and should follow within a year at the most. In the case of complex sites or large National Parks then a series of plans may be required to cover specific subjects or aspects in more detail, once an initial overview has been produced. This may take longer.

2.9 The Executive Summary

A one page executive summary should be included at the front of the plan. It should be prepared after completion of the plan and can be used as the basis for information or publicity. It should summarise the whole plan including:

- the importance of the main physical and biological features
- the relationship between people and the environment
- the major objectives for management
- how the objectives will be achieved
- estimate of the resources needed

2.10 Plan reviews

The review process needs to be agreed at an early date and should be built into the plan. Plan reviews are normally undertaken by the site manager or those directly involved in the management of the site. This distinguishes the review from the audit or assessment process. The review should be submitted to the plan's authorising body or responsible individual.

All aspects of the plan, not just the operational aspects, should be reviewed at appropriate intervals. It is desirable to critically examine the staff resources and finances used, the achievements and the effects of management. Learning from the plan review can contribute significantly to improving overall performance and delivery.

There are two types of review which help to increase the strength of the action in the plan through regular scrutiny. Both are aimed at improving the quality of delivery:

- A review of a specific part of the plan (such as a simple review of operational activities) which may be required at any time.
- An in depth review and assessment of the effectiveness of the whole plan at appropriate (usually 5 to 10 year) intervals.

2.10.1 How to review

The methods used for review will depend upon many factors and range from a simple review of the project sheets by a person with delegated responsibility, to a more sophisticated computerised control system comparing variation between the costed project plan, time inputs, actual costs and achievements.

Through the use of an appropriate coding system, data can be compared for a number of sites managed by the same organisation, between organisations, between regions or countries.

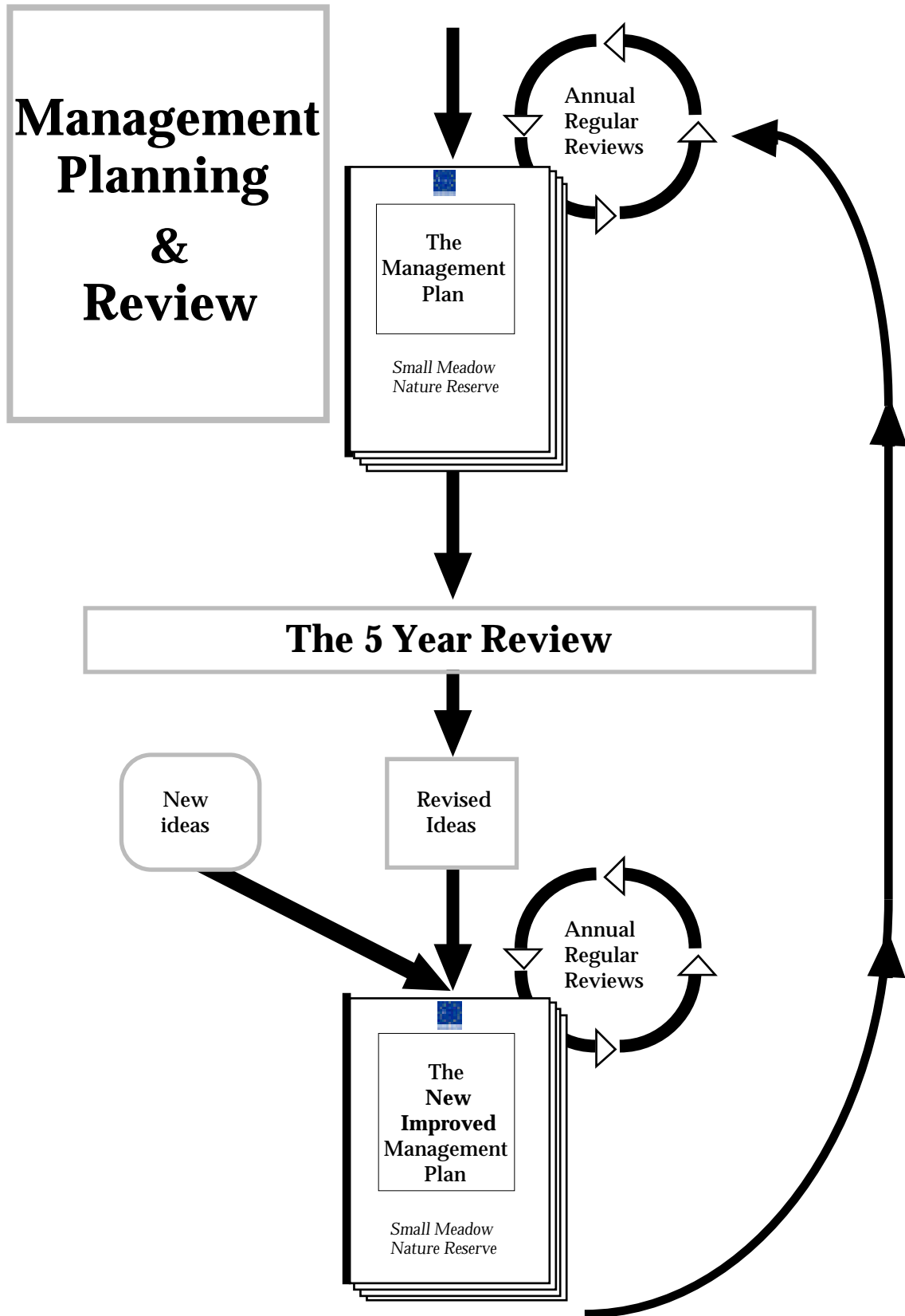
2.10.2 When to review

The time between assessments will vary according to the sensitivity of the site being managed and the need for scrutiny of resource use. The greater the sensitivity or fragility of the site, the greater the need to assess the success of the strategies and programmes in achieving the objectives.

There will be a need to assess most management actions against plans on an annual basis and simple regular annual internal reviews of the works undertaken on site are recommended. There will be exceptions. For example 'stable' systems such as mature woodland where the strategy may be for restricted access and non-intervention. In this instance, the time scale for assessment may need to be lengthened to every three or even five years.

A review of the whole plan will need to be undertaken every five to ten years, depending on the type of site, and the plan confirmed for another period or, if necessary, amended. Before a management plan is updated a systematic evaluation should be carried out. The process of drafting a plan after the expiry of the plan cycle should consist of:

1. reviewing performance and results under the old plan
2. investigating any new policies, strategies and new ideas
3. drafting the new plan based on the old plan, performance review and new ideas



If the plan is old and well established there may well be a lack of enthusiasm amongst managers to undertake the review as the plan may be seen as irrelevant or too well owned to modify in any way. Nevertheless, the necessary review should take place prior to the preparation of the new plan to enable an objective evaluation. Future needs and ideas should be excluded from this review but added in afterwards.

2.11 Audits

The managing organisation may commission a more formal system of auditing by those not responsible in any way for the site. This may be on an annual basis by staff of the organisation (**an internal audit**) or by experts or authorities from outside the managing organisation (**an external audit**). The difference between an audit and the plan review is that the review is carried out by the managers responsible for the site. An audit is carried out by those not in any way responsible for management of the site in question.

After discussion with the site manager and others responsible for the site the auditor should make recommendations about possible changes in management planning and/or the management process which might improve performance and achieve objectives more efficiently, economically and effectively. All audits should be recorded and a copy kept in the plan. The audit findings and the forward programme for implementation of agreed action should be built into the forward work programme.

A *Eurosite* Site Conservation Assessment Format has been developed, which gives a series of questions which the auditor should address. See section 4.

2.11.1 Internal audit

It is recommended that an appropriate person in the management chain, who has appropriate knowledge or appreciation of the ecosystems or biotopes, should visit the site with the site manager on a regular (annual or six monthly) basis. It may not be possible to cover the whole site in such an audit but distinctive parts of the area can be examined on rotation. It is not recommended that the site manager undertakes these audits.

In addition there will be financial audits in accordance with international, national, local or organisational needs. Safety audits are also essential for working practices by staff and contractors, especially where visitors are allowed on site.

2.11.2 External audit

The external audit is a valuable tool which assists the managing organisation in maintaining, or improving its performance. It can also serve to check whether the existing management practices compare with the latest national or international standards.

The audit may be commissioned by national or international bodies. Therefore, it should be undertaken in accordance with the appropriate national or organisational 'house' policy. Experts from another organisation, an academic/scientific institution, or from another country may well be involved in providing a neutral but knowledgeable perspective.

There are two kinds of external audit:

- 1. An examination of the management process and the plan**

The aim is to assess whether the process and the plan are appropriate to implement organisational policies, legislation and international conventions. After addressing these points, the developments or trends expected in the site are listed in approximate

priority by the auditor. Any significant variation from the ideal objectives should be noted and explanatory comments attached. This audit should be undertaken within the first two or three years of adopting the plan.

2. An assessment of the effects of management in relation to objectives, targets and strategies

This audit is ideally undertaken a year or two before the major review or rewrite of the management plan. A list should be drawn up of the recommended changes to the following strategic factors:

- policy
- resources (staff, finances, others)
- information and research needs
- ideal and operational objectives
- strategies
- management practices

2.11.3 Audit questions and process

A full description of the recommended method of undertaking an external review can be found in section 4.

As a guide, the *Eurosite* audit includes the following questions:

- What is the structure of the organisation that is responsible for the management of the site?
- Are there management policies which are relevant to the site?
- Is there a Management Plan which is relevant to the site?
- How was the site selected and the boundaries chosen?
- What national and international designations does the site hold?
- Is the site described in adequate detail, for the management specified?
- Has there been a systematic evaluation of the information available?
- Are there ideal management objectives for the site?
- Is the site zoned for management purposes?
- Are there strategies to achieve each objective ?
- Are there sufficient legal powers to implement the strategies?
- Has the planned management had to change within the plan period?

The auditor should comment on the following issues:

- Is there a reasonable future prediction of achievement of each objective?
- Has the planned management had to change within the period of the plan?
- Does the site currently require significant alterations to management regime, including objectives?
- Does the policy and infrastructure require review or change?

Managers of sites which will be audited within this system need to be familiar with the full Site Conservation Assessment Form provided by *Eurosite* or the auditor. See section 4 for a complete introduction to process and principles of an Audit.

Section 3

*The Eurosite management planning format for
natural and semi-natural sites*

The *Eurosite* management planning format for natural and semi-natural sites

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Preparing to use the format

The *Eurosite* Management Planning Format provides a flexible framework for management planning. This latest revision of the plan has been derived from earlier versions which have been well tested in the field.

The format is presented in a logical sequence, which should be followed through to its end. Alternatively, where a plan is needed for specific circumstances, the format can be used as a checklist to identify the elements required for the plan. Individual plans may omit parts or add others. Each part can be in the form of tabulated data, notes, maps, or pages of text as suits the individual or organisation preparing the plan. Compilation in a loose-leaf format is recommended.

Each plan prepared using the format should have a cover page laying out:

- Title
- Period covered by the plan
- Who prepared the plan
- The name and address of the managing organisation
- Date prepared and authorised
- Location of the 'master' copy
- Planned review date

The numbered sections in the format form the minimum essential headings for a *Eurosite* management plan. It may not be necessary to include information under each heading for every plan written using the format, but it is essential to consider each one in order to devise as an objective a plan as possible. Information material should be included as appropriate under each heading. Where a heading is relevant to a site, but information is absent or lacking, it is important to state this fact.

Parts of the format with un-numbered headings are for information, advice or guidance.

Availability of the *Eurosite* Management Plan format

The *Eurosite* management plan format is available as a free download for members in various software formats from *Eurosite's* Intranet. If you are not linked yet, get in touch with your organisation's *Eurosite* contact to find out how to access the intranet or direct with the *Eurosite* Programme & Development Office.

Paper copies are available from the *Eurosite* Secretariat in France.

Contact:

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The Executive Summary

A one page executive summary should be included at the front of the plan. It should be prepared after completion of the plan and can be used as the basis for information or publicity. It should summarise the whole plan including:

- the importance of the main physical and biological features
- the relationship between people and the environment
- the major objectives for management
- how the objectives will be achieved
- estimate of the resources needed

1. Background

1.1 Policy

This part of the process brings together and summarises the policies that affect the site, how and why it has been selected and why management is required.

Legal designations

This section should briefly explain the legislative constraints and opportunities that apply to the site in relation to international, national and local policies. See box below for examples of designations.

Designations		
International	National	Local
World Heritage site	National Parks	Landscape Protected Area
Ramsar site	National Nature Reserve	Regional Park
Biosphere Reserve	National Protected Area	
Natura 2000 site	Natural Monument	

This may mean that constraining policies apply to the management of the site and that the preparation of the plan involves a range of interested parties. For example, there are very specific obligations placed on EU Member States for the sites within the Natura 2000 network.

Organisational policy

The remit and policy of an organisation will determine how it approaches the management of a particular site. For instance a specialist ornithological society may well have a different set of policies on site management from a Governmental organisation. They are likely to want to acquire control on a different set of sites and may wish to manage them differently.

The organisation's policy statement should outline what the organisation wants to achieve in general terms, how it intends to achieve these goals, and how the particular site under consideration fits into this policy.

In addition, some organisations achieve their policies on site management through acquisition or other controls or by influencing others by giving advice on management. It would be useful to state which approach is used in the main.

1.2 Site selection

This section describes the history of how the site was selected and why management is needed.

National biological surveys may have been undertaken to identify areas with important natural features. Refer to such surveys so that the features for which the site has been selected can be clearly recognised for management planning purposes.

Before a management plan can be prepared, the organisation has to achieve control over all or part of the land. This may be by designation or through acquisition of the site or area.

Organisations often select sites, which meet their objectives through undertaking a survey or review. Reference should be made to this process in the management plan as it is likely to influence the setting of management objectives. Refer to such selection processes, and summarise the relative position and qualities of the site within the survey.

For practical reasons sites acquired are seldom exactly those originally selected although management of the whole may be possible. The plan needs to take all the constraints and opportunities associated with ownership into account and a brief explanation provided in the plan.

2. Site description

The site description should be full, clear and succinct. It must be confined to facts which influence site management. Supporting or more detailed information should be placed in an annex and referenced. The site should be set in its wider context so that the effects of both positive and negative internal and external factors upon the site, can be assessed.

This section and the supporting reference material in annexes can be expanded as more information becomes available.

The potential of the site in both ecological and land use terms may also be described. A description of the local socio-economic conditions including its history, as well as physical and ecological features should be included.

If there is any information which is regarded as necessary to the management plan, but which is not available, then this should be recorded and its collection planned.

General information

2.1 Location and site boundaries

2.1.1 Location – Give sufficient information to be able to locate the site. A small-scale location map for the whole site is generally helpful. Show clearly the State, Country, Region, Département/ County, and the nearest town, village or other distinctive feature, together with longitude, latitude, altitude, and relevant map references.

2.1.2 Site boundaries – Show the site boundaries clearly on a large-scale map and state the reasons for the existing boundaries. Where boundaries cannot be shown by a map, add a description to the plan explaining the limits of the site.

2.2 Legal status and rights

2.2.1 Ownership – Describe and provide maps of the current and previous ownership of the whole site. If the site is not owned by the managing organisation, then describe and refer to copies of agreements made over the land. Copies of title deeds should be included in an annex. Describe and refer in map form to any leases, covenants or licences as well as other legal responsibilities such as boundary maintenance.

2.2.2 Legal rights – Record and map any legal rights from other parties. For example rights of way, collection of shellfish, peat cutting and hunting. Include extracts from any relevant title deeds and identify the various responsibilities. For example, maintenance of a right of way may rest with the owner. It would also be useful to identify any adjoining legal rights that may affect the management of the site.

2.2.3 Site status – State all legal designations affecting the site and include copies of legislation, secondary legislation, statutory instruments or regulations in an annex. References to international or national designations should be given particular attention. State if a site is within an area with a wider designation. For example, there may be a Protected Area within a National Park or Conservation Area.

2.2.4 Other plans – Undertake a search for other plans, which relate to all or part of the site under consideration. Establish the relationship between your site and the plans identified as this may influence management decisions. For example, the site may lie within a regional structural plan for development.

2.3 Management infrastructure

2.3.1 Organisations – List all organisations or individuals involved in the management of the site. State who is responsible for writing which aspects of the plan. Describe the process by which the plan will receive approval. Indicate who is responsible for the key administrative aspects of the site.

2.3.2 Responsibilities – Identify individual responsibilities and accountabilities for the various aspects of site management with contact points and details. These details will need to be regularly reviewed in order to keep them up to date.

2.3.3 Facilities – Briefly describe all the buildings on site, their purpose and structure. Where there are no staff or structures involved, then specify how the plan will be implemented.

2.3.4 Services – Describe all service routes entering, crossing or lying immediately adjacent to a site. Examples include roads, water pipes, gas pipes, electricity pylons & cables, drainage ditches and canals. State what the arrangements are for maintenance, the rights of access and the normal frequency of activity.

2.3.5 Health & Safety – Include a section on Health & Safety issues on the site in accordance with national legislation. Don't forget to include the legal obligations of employers and employees of the managing organisation.

Physical Features

2.4 Climate

2.4.1 National climate – Describe the national climatic conditions including rainfall, temperature averages and ranges. Ideally this should be the same statement for all protected area management plans within the country.

2.4.2 Regional climate – Identify and describe regional variations from the national figures for the site.

2.4.3 Site climate – Describe the climatic features of the site and indicate how site features (elevation, exposure, aspect, vegetation) influence the local climate and/or how the climate influences the site.

Descriptions of both regional and site climate are particularly useful as they have an underpinning influence on site features and therefore site management. Remember to only include relevant information and include all supporting information in an annex.

2.5 Geology and land forms (features & processes)

2.5.1 Bedrock – Attach a map or describe the type of bed rock on the site and its regional context. (C-material or ‘mother’ material). It may be sufficient to include descriptions from existing geological surveys as long as the information is clearly expressed and the link to management can be made.

2.5.2 Drift material – Attach a map or describe the type of drift material found on the site and its regional context.

2.5.3 Erosion/deposition and other processes – Record, describe and map how these processes are known to affect the site.

2.5.4 Land forms – Describe prominent and important features using standard terminology. Maps or even photos can be particularly useful to show the location and type of important site features.

2.6 Soils/substrates

2.6.1 The major soil or substrate types – Name, describe and map those present. Record the nutrient status of each type, plus minor nutrients if relevant.

2.7 Hydrology

2.7.1 Groundwater – Record the ground water status and dynamics.

2.7.2 Marine, brackish and freshwater influences – Describe all systems (a map is optional).

2.7.3 Drainage flows – record and map within the site and describe the degree of waterlogging of the soils.

Ecological and biological features

2.8 Ecosystems (habitats) vegetation and ecological processes

Describe the important, typical and rare habitats, ecosystems, biotopes or communities present. It is important to set the site in a wider national or European context, especially where the biotopes and species present are features of international significance.

When possible, describe the vegetation using standard European or international terminology such as that used in the European Union's Natura 2000 network (referred to as EUR15). A short introduction from the EUR15 Interpretation Manual and a reference list of habitat types and species present in each biogeographical region is presented in Section 8. These lists and the full text of the manual are available as free downloads from EC Directorate General XI's website: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg11/nature/natura.htm>.

The vegetation description will, for many sites, form the basic framework for management purposes and it is therefore a very important section. In addition to the broad ecosystem classification, describe the communities present, their age and structure e.g. ground layer features and their distribution, tree layer composition, distribution and age, littoral/sublittoral/marine communities. These descriptions may require maps, transect descriptions, photographs and reference to existing surveys. Detailed information should be placed in an annex.

In order to give context to the site, briefly describe the area surrounding the site emphasising whether the site is located in a larger area of natural or semi-natural habitats, or if it is surrounded by intensive agriculture, commercial forestry, commercial or urban development.

2.9 Flora

List internationally, nationally important, typical, or rare species. Refer to their status and ecology and describe when possible specific management requirements. List and map particularly abundant or local species and comment on their distribution and seasonality.

2.9.1 Lower plants (lichens, algae, liverworts, fungi, ferns)

Lower plants can sometimes be the most important features on a natural site, e.g. raised bogs in Northern Europe and lichen-rich oak woodlands along Europe's Atlantic coasts. Therefore, it is important not to overlook them in the rush to write the plan. Surveys can be time-consuming and expensive, but may be useful in identifying key species. These should be highlighted in this section and extensive lists confined to an annex or reference made to where they can be found. It may be helpful to consider each of the taxonomic groups listed separately. Highlight any gaps in knowledge which need to be filled.

2.9.1 Higher plants (flowering plants, grasses, sedges, rushes)

Include lists as an annex or refer to where lists of species and other biological data are located. It may be helpful to consider each of the groups listed separately. As for lower plants, highlight any gaps in knowledge which need to be filled.

2.10 Fauna

General Advice:

List internationally and nationally important, typical, or rare species, refer to their status and ecology and describe specific management requirements where these are known. List and map particularly abundant or local species on site and include comments about their distribution and seasonality.

Describe all communities and distinctive, rare or important species with population estimates, where relevant, and their international/ national status. Refer to and use standardised map habitats, especially for breeding areas of rare species, and indicate national, regional or local importance together with references to any biodiversity action plans. Provide species lists as an annex or refer to where lists are located.

Helpful hint:

In some cases, local experts and amateur naturalists, may be able to provide useful information about important species or important micro-habitats for species with specific requirements, such as invertebrates on site. Local museums can also be a useful historical resource, particularly for the less well-studied groups.

Species of European importance, especially those listed in Annex II of the EU Habitats and Species Directive should be given particular attention as there are specific obligations for their conservation management. For more information on the Directive and the Natura 2000 network visit the DGXI's website at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg11/index_en.htm

Groups to consider:

2.10.1 Invertebrates

2.10.2 Fish

2.10.3 Amphibians & reptiles

2.10.4 Birds

2.10.5 Mammals

Socio-economic features

2.11 Human Use within the Site	
2.11.1 Nature conservation	
Must Consider:	Management practices that sustain or enhance the interest of the site.
Comments:	Include details of the potential for sustainable development and income generation.
Helpful Hint:	Nature conservation is the <i>raison d'être</i> for the site, but this may not be the only use.
2.11.2 Agriculture	
Must consider:	Agricultural uses within the site
Comments:	Describe the relevance of agriculture to maintaining site quality or how it affects ecological processes
Helpful Hint:	What economic importance does agriculture have to the local community?
2.11.3 Forestry	
Must consider:	Any forestry or silvicultural activities, including their purpose and timing.
Comments:	Indicate known effects on the site and the features for which it has been selected.
Helpful Hint:	Identify sensitive times of the year for key features which may be damaged by forestry operations
2.11.4 Recreation	
Must consider	Current activities concerning enjoyment of the site on land, in the air and on/under water
Comments	Describe the frequency of visits to particular areas, any seasonal variation and estimate the impact on important site features.
Helpful Hint:	Consider how licensing arrangements may influence management.

2.11.5 Hunting and Fishing	
Must consider:	Those activities which impact directly or indirectly on the site.
Comments:	Describe or estimate the numbers of animals removed, the amount of disturbance, relevant laws and regulations and their efficiency. Describe seasonality of activity and where it takes place.
Helpful Hint:	Include hunting and fishing stakeholders in consultation at an early stage.
2.11.6 Extraction	
Must consider:	Any extraction that has an impact on the site e.g. salt winning, aggregate winning or mineral extraction. State the volume extracted, seasonal variation and overall benefits and disbenefits on the features of interest.
Comments:	Extraction companies may be interested in developing new areas for nature conservation on exhausted areas such as gravel pits.
Helpful Hint:	Quarries and mines can also be important for natural features, e.g. xerophilic plants, birds and bats. Don't dismiss them as wildlife deserts.
2.11.7 Water Use	
Must consider:	Water uses which form a feature of the site or which affect it in any way (including abstraction, storage, eutrophication and pollution factors).
Comments:	How dependent are the site features on water for their survival?
Helpful Hint:	Is there more research needed on the ecological and human dynamics of water use on site?
2.11.8 Education, demonstration and research	
Must consider:	All educational use of the site. Examples include schools, colleges, universities and/or adult education groups. List or refer to natural history studies and records made by amateurs and indicate the time of year of educational visits, numbers anticipated, peak times of visits etc.
Comments:	If management of the site is demonstrated to other groups, managers or students, state the objectives and benefits arising. Describe research uses that are current and identify areas where research is needed so that it can be appropriately encouraged.

Helpful Hint:	Don't underestimate the value of 'amateurs' and their records to help your understanding of the site and its management
2.11.9 Other uses	
Must consider:	There may well be other major uses of the site or potential for use, such as tourism, ecotourism, disposal of materials, pollution, military training and poaching.
Comments:	Identify and describe the positive and negative impacts on the site.
Helpful Hint:	Is there a site 'users' association or group in existence? If not, is it appropriate for your organisation to start one. Users will have an important stake in how the site is managed. In some situations, a group can be a useful forum for testing ideas and resolving problems. See section 2.5 Consultation.

2.12 Human use outside and affecting the site	
2.12.1 Nature conservation	
Must Consider:	Describe management practices which sustain or enhance the interest of the site but which take place outside it.
Comments:	Look to see how other nature conservation bodies plans at a local and regional scale fit into your organisation's.
Helpful Hint:	Nature does not respect Man's boundaries. What is the importance of your site in the local/ regional context, particularly for migratory species?
2.12.2 Agriculture	
Must consider:	Describe agricultural uses outside the site especially when they are important to maintaining features or when they affect the quality of the site.
Comments:	Describe seasonal use of the site and impacts on particularly sensitive species e.g. hay-making or use of the site for store cattle.
Helpful Hint:	Talk to local farmers - Try to understand how your site fits into the agricultural operations of farms within the immediate surroundings. How can farmers help you manage the site?
2.12.3 Forestry	
Must consider:	Describe any forestry or silvicultural activities that affect the site including their purpose, timing and an indication of their effect on the site.
Comments:	If your site forms part of a larger forest or woodland complex, make contact with local forestry organisations. Try to understand how your site fits into their operations.
Helpful Hint:	Is there potential for influencing their management to benefit nature conservation features through demonstration of your good practice and without compromising their objectives

2.12.4 Recreation	
Must consider:	Describe all those activities that have an effect on the site.
Comments:	To what extent are recreation activities within your control? Is the site extensively used by visitors from outside the region?
Helpful Hint:	Look for opportunities through recreation groups, companies and societies to 'advertise' responsible recreational use of the site.
2.12.5 Hunting and Fishing	
Must consider:	Describe all activities outside the site together with their direct and indirect effects on the site.
Comments:	Provide information on estimates of, or actual numbers taken, the amount of disturbance, relevant laws and regulations, the efficiency of regulation and, if activities are limited to seasons or to parts of the site.
Helpful Hint:	Is there a national coordinating body with a clear and helpful policy on nature conservation which may help in discussions?
2.12.6 Extraction	
Must consider:	Describe any extraction outside the site that has an impact on it e.g. salt winning, aggregate winning, mineral extraction. Details of the volume extracted, seasonal variation and overall benefit/disbenefit on the features should be included.
Comments:	There may well be extraction some distance away from the site, but which could potentially affect valuable features through transport of pollution by air and water.
Helpful Hint:	Are there any plans for new extraction sites in the surroundings, which may affect your site and which you should know about?

2.12.7 Water Use	
Must consider:	Describe water uses that affect the site including water abstraction, eutrophication and pollution
Comments:	Consider the likely or known future changes in water abstraction from sources some distance from the site, for example if there are any large housing or industrial developments planned in the immediate surroundings.
Helpful Hint:	Consider the possibilities for altering any detrimental affects on the site through water pollution or abstraction, e.g. by installing sluice gates, pumping or water treatment
2.12.8 Education, demonstration and research	
Must consider:	Describe usage by schools, colleges, universities and/or adult education groups outside the site and which have an impact on it.
Comments:	Natural history studies and records made by amateurs should be listed and an indication given as to the time of year of visits, numbers anticipated etc. Research uses that are current should also be described where these relate to the site.
Helpful Hint:	Look for opportunities to maximise your knowledge about the site with other similar sites nationally or even internationally through, for example, <i>Eurosite's</i> bilateral exchange programme.
2.12.9 Other uses	
Must consider:	Describe uses such as dumping, military training outside the site along with the effects on the interests of the site.
Comments:	Identify and describe the positive and negative impacts on the site.
	Are there any 'new' uses or trends in the surroundings, which may in time spread to your site, e.g. snowboarding, raves or off-road vehicle driving?

2.13 Economic aspects and population

Place the site in its local economic context, in particular the number of direct/indirect employees and the inputs and outputs to and from the local economy. Describe any settlements near the site and the use that its people make of the site and adjacent land.

Describe those planning policies which are relevant and either give extra protection or which might put additional pressure on the site. Indicate trends in political, social, economic or planning terms.

2.14 Past human land use

Include past land uses especially those where any traditional (pre 1950) practices may have provided or continue to provide nature conservation benefit. Refer to historical maps.

2.15 Cultural heritage

2.15.1 Archaeological artefacts

List these and any evidence of (pre-) historical activity. Indicate the importance of evidence of these activities on the site. Also list all known historical and pre-industrial activities, from documents and other evidence.

2.15.2 National historical monuments

Describe national monuments and other features, clearly indicating their status, management/development controls, uses that are permissible, and activities that must be avoided.

2.16 Landscape and aesthetic qualities

Describe cultural landscapes and any national features including their status and resulting management/development controls and uses that are permissible, and activities that must be avoided.

2.17 Additional descriptive material

Provide any relevant descriptive material that is not included under the above titles as an Annex to the plan. Include:

2.17.1 Bibliography

List all references used in the preparation of the plan, and those giving more background information on the site, and indicate their whereabouts.

2.17.2 Data-bases

List all relevant local, regional or (inter-)national databases.

2.17.3 Map coverage

List all relevant maps such as land use maps, road maps, geological/soil maps and historic maps, stating references and scales.

2.17.4 Ground photographic coverage

Refer to main collections of photographic material and their location - dates, scale, colour, etc.

2.17.5 Aerial and satellite photographic coverage

Indicate the type of photograph (e.g. aerial, vertical or oblique, satellite), year, scale and location.

3. Evaluation and objectives

Introduction

Having described the site or area there is a need to evaluate the information available in order to determine the ideal objectives for management. These lead on to the operational objectives. The process of condensing the description and the policy of the organisation down to the key points is termed the 'First evaluation'. Methods used can vary from subjectively scoring a number of points on a checklist to a written discussion.

3.1 First evaluation

There are many criteria that can be used to evaluate the importance of features found on the site. Experience throughout Europe has shown that it is easier to define objectives for each site by a systematic consideration of the ecological and socio-economic criteria outlined below. It helps the assessment if the descriptions under each criteria are displayed in tabular form. On complex or very large sites the evaluation tables may need to be compiled for each major habitat or part of the site. Only the criteria relevant to the site should be used.

For habitats and species on sites included within the Natura 2000 network, the evaluation of these features on site has been carried out to a large extent at the European and national levels through the site selection process. This may help to ease the evaluation process. See Section 8 for more information about the Natura 2000 network.

3.1.1 Ecological criteria

The ecological criteria used here are based on those developed for site selection by Ratcliffe (1977)¹.

1. Fragility

How sensitive, and to what, are the various features to be found on the site? Are they robust or fragile? Generally the more fragile the features, the greater will be the need to develop objectives which are sensitive to this and as a consequence the greater the need for careful and precise management.

2. Rarity

Assess the rarity of the most important habitat mosaics, habitats and species together with their importance in international, national, regional or local terms. Give special consideration to sites which have species on the verge of national, European or world extinction.

3. Naturalness

The most natural ecosystems, habitats or biotopes – i.e. those least altered by man - are usually more valuable in nature conservation terms. Assess the extent to which ecosystems have been altered by man. See also 'typicality'.

4. Typicality

Good examples of 'typical' habitats or biotopes are valuable in several ways. Some sites show how plant and animal communities have responded to a particular land-use practice over a long period of time (e.g. typical species to be found in grazed or hay meadows). Other sites contain typical communities which have responded to local geology, soils, climate or water regime.

¹ Ratcliffe, D (1977) A Nature Conservation Review. Nature Conservancy Council, UK

5. Special interest

Consider the special human interest of some species or habitats. The intrinsic appeal of some species is greater than others. Birds or butterflies are often given more weighting in a site evaluation than are leeches or beetles though the latter may be rarer! The aesthetic qualities of a site can also enhance or reduce its 'value' to humanity.

6. Size

Large sites are potentially more valuable for nature conservation than smaller ones. However a small site may contain the only remaining example of a given species, habitat or mix of habitats and therefore its importance can also be very high. A key question is whether the site is large enough to maintain viable populations of its major components.

7. Diversity

Consider the diversity within a site on a regional or national basis in terms of:

- habitats and habitat structure
- biological groups
- species
- the extent to which ecological niches are filled. This is the concept of completeness.

8. Stability and instability

Considering a series of key questions can provide a way of describing stability. These could include:

- Are the existing habitats stable or is the whole site in transition?
- How is the site responding to both natural and human induced changes?
- How important are these trends?
- How viable is the site and its species or communities?
- What are the possibilities for maintaining the site's present interest?
- Is it important, in conservation terms, to maintain the existing habitats and interfaces (i.e. by arresting ecological change) or should managers allow ecological change to develop without interference?
- Is there a need to reverse ecological changes in some parts of the site?

9. Ecological position

The place of the site in the ecological structure of the region or country is an extremely important consideration for the first evaluation. For example, the site may function as a resting place for migratory birds, or as a 'stepping stone' or ecological corridor for valuable species. The site may also be a typical or characteristic element in the range of geographical variation. Mention should also be made of the status of the area or site within a European network. Examples include the European Union Natura 2000 network or the Pan-European Ecological Network.

10. Replaceability

This is defined as the effort (time and resources) that are required to re-establish a species or habitat on a site. This assessment reflects the value that a natural or semi-natural habitat or community has for nature conservation. The harder it is to re-establish a species or habitat, the more it should be protected. Three categories can be identified:

1. Non-replaceable

Reconstruction of appropriate physical conditions will take more than 50 years, and/or it is unlikely that the replacement will be successful and/or it is only possible at very large cost or with substantial damage to other natural conditions or communities.

2. Difficult to replace

Reconstruction is possible but the site requires careful management for at least 10 to 15 years.

3. Easy to replace

Without significant effort the structure which makes up the habitat or the indicator species will reappear.

It is important to emphasise that there is much disagreement amongst conservationists as to the degree to which ecosystems can be reconstructed. Some bodies maintain that full ecological reconstruction is not possible. Therefore, managers should adopt a cautious approach to the use of this criterion and not consider it in complete isolation from the others.

3.1.2 Socio-economic criteria

Describe the economics of the social, agricultural, forestry, hunting and tourism aspects of land use on the site which may conflict with ideal or practical nature conservation objectives. Identify all significant activities, their conflicts and benefits.

3.1.3 Potential value

Consider if the site would benefit from ecological and socio-economic activities. Identify conflicts or opportunities and draw up ways of making progress. Consider the potential of the site under each of the following headings.

- ecological improvement
- landscape improvement/visual improvements
- education/research opportunities
- generation of revenue both for the owner of the site and for local communities
- demonstration possibilities to other land managers
- stronger protection through legislation or designation
- public/ visitor enjoyment
- maintenance of cultural, social, historical or traditional heritage or ways of life

3.2 Ideal objectives for the site

At this point the quality and extent of the existing features, and the potential of the site are used to prepare a list of ideal objectives. The ideal objectives are those that the manager would strive for if he had complete control over activities and land uses within and adjacent to the site. Any factors which may temper the manager's ideals are ignored. Therefore ideal objectives are not necessarily either practically possible or economically viable. They are an indication of the potential of the site to which management aspires. However, the ideal objective may be achievable, but over a longer period of time than the period of the plan. This is often then termed a 'Long term objective'. For future reference, it may be helpful to record how the ideal objectives were derived.

An objective is a statement of aims. It should be expressed in a concise phrase which starts with the word 'to'.

Ideal objectives should take into account all relevant aspects of site management and policies which apply to management of ecological features. That is, historical, cultural and social aspects of the site, research, education and public use should not be excluded from consideration.

Some objectives will be more important than others and it may be useful to list them accordingly in priority order. A note should be put in the plan stating that this is the case. Another approach is to separate the objectives into those of primary importance and those of secondary importance, so that priorities can be seen at a glance.

Aide-memoire for derivation of typical ideal objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important species 	<p>If important habitats or species are threatened, or are declining in extent, quality or number, then the maintenance of the habitat or population of the species would be relevant objectives. At this stage in planning, ideal objectives can be broadly worded.</p> <p>Example: “<i>To maintain the extent and condition of the oak woodland on the site</i>”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive or dominant species 	<p>These are frequently non-native, exotic or introduced and may be the cause of the loss of fragile habitats or the reduction in the number of valuable species. Such aggressive species may need to be controlled or eliminated from the site.</p> <p>Example: “<i>To ensure that the value of the areas of species-rich alkaline, sandy grassland is not threatened by invasive plants such as <u>Asclepias syrica</u> and <u>Robinia pseudacacia</u></i>”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditions 	<p>Where there has been a long history of traditional land use – such as low-intensity grazing by cattle or sheep – which has had a strong influence on the development or survival of a habitat or species, then the maintenance of the land use practices can be derived as an ideal objective. However, continuing or restoring a land use practice will usually be a means of achieving an objective rather than an objective in its own right (see paragraph 4.1 on management strategies).</p> <p>If traditional land uses have given way to modern agricultural or forestry techniques, then the objective may be to reduce or eliminate the effects of such activities</p> <p>Example:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>“To restore the traditional mowing regime on the grasslands”</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragile features 	<p>Consider whether maintaining fragile habitats, protecting rare or endangered features, maintaining the typical attributes of the site or maintaining habitat and species diversity are important objectives.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance 	<p>Balancing the need for management action against allowing natural development of habitats is always a difficult decision to make. As so many European sites are islands in a 'sea' of intensive agriculture or severely modified habitats, then it may be important to arrest ecological succession in order to maintain the distribution of rare species and disappearing habitats. It is important to remember that an ideal objective should be visionary and can look beyond the borders of the site. This may be put in practice by influencing surrounding management</p>

	practices through advice or by gaining control in the future. For example, it may be possible to aim towards habitat creation outside the site or between it and other important protected areas as an ideal objective, in order to ensure the long-term survival of features on site.
• Research & education	The development or control of research, education or eco-tourism, recreation or other public use can be considered as an objective.
• Local economy	The local socio-economic situation needs careful consideration. Sustaining local economic activities may be an objective, particularly where they are dependent upon the site (say for fishing or agriculture). Conversely, removal or modification of economic activities which are adversely affecting the interests of the site may be important.
• Landscapes	Protection of important landscapes which contribute to the natural value of the site could also be considered as ideal objectives. Consideration should be given to important landscapes which contribute to the value of the site.

3.3 Constraints or modifiers

In reality the manager will not be able to achieve all the ideal objectives because of a number of influencing factors. These are called constraints and modifiers. The term 'constraint' should only be used to describe a negative influence. A 'modifier' may be neutral, positive, or of unknown impact. In practice the two terms are often used interchangeably.

Constraints and modifiers should be listed systematically and described briefly. It is often helpful to consider them under separate headings such as "Within" and "Outside" the site. The following lists provide guidance.

3.3.1 Potentially occurring constraints or modifiers 'within the site'

- Ecological change. Examples: Successional change; The spread of alien or invasive species
- Climate
- Geomorphology
- Physical factors that affect the site. For example, water levels, catchment area and pollution
- Land-use and economic trends: Are existing land uses within the site compatible with achieving the ideal objectives?
- Resources/staff: Are there sufficient staff to manage the site effectively? Are the financial resources sufficient in the short term? Have sufficient financial provisions been made and built into the long term planning for the site?

- **Expertise:** Is there a lack of knowledge or expertise within the managing organisation?
- **Technology:** Is technology used within the site having any adverse effects upon habitats, flora or fauna? For example is a change from traditional hay making to silage reducing the number of any species? Has a change from one type of hay cutter to another had any effect?
- **Policies:** Have any policies of the managing organisation had an adverse effect upon the aesthetic quality, habitat or species within the site?
- **Legislation:** Do any of the designations or other aspects of the relevant legislation constrain the objectives so that the possibilities for enhancement of habitats for example are limited or opened up?

3.3.2 Potentially occurring constraints or modifiers "outside the site"

- **Land use:** How do neighbouring land uses affect species or habitats?
- **Economic trends:** Are changes in the economic wealth of the community regionally or nationally having an effect upon the site?
- **Technological changes:** Is new technology, particularly in agriculture, forestry, water treatment, and industry, having any effect on the site?
- **Expertise or knowledge:** Has there been a change in the source of local expertise, skills or knowledge perhaps due to local depopulation or because of an influx of new people, resulting in any effects upon the site?
- **Social or cultural changes:** In some circumstances changes from traditional practices can have a considerable impact upon a site.
- **Legal factors:** Legal or legislative changes at local, national or international level can have widespread consequences for the site. Are there any international Directives or Conventions relevant to the site? Are there agreements or rights which local people have and which affect the site?
- **Political factors:** Are local, national or international political changes causing a threat to the site?
- **Planning constraints:** Are local planning decisions affecting the ecology of the site?

3.4 Second evaluation

The purpose of the second evaluation is to measure the effects of the identified constraints and modifiers on the ideal objectives and to arrive at a set of practically achievable objectives.

These objectives will be moderated by the existing or likely resources, available expertise and technology and within the local social, economic and political situation. These objectives are called operational objectives (see section 3.5 below)

The second evaluation should address the following questions:

- What effects do constraints and modifiers have upon ideal objectives?
- How fast are the effects of the constraints and modifiers happening?
- To what extent are the effects of the constraints and modifiers taking place?
- Can the constraints and modifiers be changed and if so what action is needed to do this?

Some factors, such as international, national and local legislation, may be beyond the ability of local managers to modify.

One approach to the second evaluation is to consider the effect of each constraint and modifier as it is listed. Another approach is to have a separate section of evaluation. Scoring systems can provide an element of objectivity.

Table: An example of part of a second evaluation using a tabulation and scoring method

	Ideal objective 3.3.1 To maintain a traditional pasture	Ideal objective 3.3.2 To maintain the breeding bird population
Constraint 4.1.1 Reduction in economic viability of traditional farming systems	-3	+1
	<i>Comments:</i> Management neglect is a problem	<i>Comments:</i> Provides some short term opportunities for long grass and scrub loving birds
Constraint 4.1.2 Intensification of farming methods	-3	+1
	<i>Comments:</i> Loss of pasture through reclamation around site	<i>Comments:</i> Could favour breeding wading birds of intensive pasture
Constraint 4.2. Seasonal use of site by campers and bird watchers	0	-2
	<i>Comments:</i> No anticipated effects at current levels	<i>Comments:</i> Disturbance a problem in May
<i>Where +3 is the most positive impact on the objective, 0 means no impact and -3 is the most negative.</i>		

The evaluation can be presented as a written discussion. However, for clarity, it is best presented in tabular form (see example table) possibly accompanied by a written explanation.

The evaluation should be systematically checked to ensure that each ideal objective has been evaluated against all the relevant constraints and an operational objective generated. In those cases where no constraints influence an ideal objective, then the operational objective is identical to the ideal objective.

3.5 Operational Objectives

The operational objectives are derived from the ideal objectives as a statement of aims and should be expressed in a concise sentence which begins with the word 'to'.

Operational objectives must be practically achievable and SMART (see box below). All relevant issues of the policy section should be covered by the operational objectives.

Do your objectives conform to the SMART test?	
S pecific	Be as concise and precise as possible
M easurable	Identify what products or outcomes will result
A chievable	Don't over stretch yourself and your resources
R ealistic	Don't attempt to save the world! Think locally
T ime scale	Specify when you will achieve the objectives

In the same way as for ideal objectives, operational objectives may be listed in order of importance or divided into primary and secondary objectives. In the same way, A note should be put in the plan indicating importance or priority if these systems are used.

Since achievement of operational objectives may be used as part of the criteria for the success or failure of management, they are also management targets. Wherever possible they should be quantified or referred to an outcome which can in some way be measured, for example:

"Maintain the population of species X between an upper limit of 500 individuals and a lower limit of 400 individuals"

is a clearer operational objective than

"Maintain a high population level of species X".

Alternatively, if insufficient information is known about the levels of change of the population, or there are many other variables out of management control which may strongly affect population levels, it would be better to word an objective which specifies the conditions which will be created by management which are known or thought likely on the best available information to favour the target species.

“Maintain the grassland sward at a height of between 5 to 10 cm across at least 60% of its area in order to favour the breeding success of short-toed larks (Calandrella brachydactyla)”

Setting objectives which quantify the management results of the site in terms of indicator species or parameters such as water table levels in this way can provide a useful measurement of the overall health of the ecosystems being managed.

When selecting the operational objectives, managers may also wish to take into consideration how the site will be monitored and may choose to relate the objectives to the parameters which will be used for monitoring.

4. Implementation

4.1 Management strategies

When operational objectives have been determined so that it is clear what is to be done where, the next step is to decide how the objectives will be met. A method or methods must be selected and described for each of the operational objectives with an alternative option or options to allow some flexibility. The timescale over which the objective must be achieved should be stated and the criteria for success and failure identified. An indication of the resources needed and the priority should also be given.

These points are covered in a series of management strategies which will have to be stated for protecting the site and for its use. A checklist of management strategies should be considered before planning the management projects, the final stage of the plan (see section 4.3). Each operational objective must be covered by one or more management strategies. A strategy may contribute to more than one operational objective.

4.1.1 Commonly occurring areas of activity covered by management strategies

A management strategy should be determined for the following areas of activity:

- **Maintaining or enhancing habitats/biotores, habitat structure and the diversity of habitats and species.**

The possibilities for management strategies for habitats and species are listed in the box below. For habitats, they range from 'hands-off' to active management.

For species management the possibilities listed below all imply to some extent some form of intervention, from maintaining to increasing populations. The last option is likely also to be useful when devising a strategy for the management of 'pest' species.

Management Strategies	
Habitats	Species
• non-intervention	• maintain
• limited intervention	• enhance or increase
• active intervention	• reintroduce
	• control or reduce

- **Public use, recreation, visitor facilities, education/demonstration and study or research.** Management strategies for general access and recreation to the natural site could vary from that of:
 - being completely closed to the public
 - restricted access
 - partially open or zoned access
 - fully open access

Once the strategy on the type and level of use has been determined, then management projects need to be formulated for the provision of any necessary facilities. These may include building hides, information panels, roads, paths, trails, signposts, provisions for the safety of the public and public relations materials. If the site is to be used for education, interpretation or demonstration, then a strategy which covers the management of publicity will need to be formulated in the plan. The range of options could include:

- minimum publicity
- low key publicity
- active publicity
- special promotions

Managers should consider a management strategy to decide the level of assistance given to study and research groups. The provision of facilities could range from:

- no facilities
- specialist facilities
- controlled facilities
- open facilities

Managers will need to consider whether they should charge for the use of facilities, how to administer receipts and the scope for sponsorship (e.g. by local industry).

- **Estate management**
A management strategy should be formulated for the management of 'estate' matters. This includes buildings and roads (usually those other than for public use), boundaries, fences, amenity planting, agricultural and sporting licences (hunting and fishing), rights of way, management by grazing, burning or other means, application of chemicals (fertilisers/pesticides). This list is not exhaustive.
- **Miscellaneous**
Management strategies need to be formulated which cover the implementation of legal issues and regulations, employment of staff, contracting of services, accommodation, equipment and employer safety. A Health and Safety policy statement should be drawn up which covers the activities of all visitors, employees and contractors. This should include a risk assessment of all aspects of work and should identify all areas of risk to human Health and Safety.

4.2 Zoning and prescriptions – Using zones as a management tool

4.2.1 Units

When dealing with large or complex sites it is often helpful to divide it up into units and to treat these separately within the plan. The term '*compartment*' is often used with the same meaning. Units are usually permanent subdivisions of a site, based on different criteria, for example:

- 1. Ecological units**

A large site can contain an intertidal unit, a coastal unit with dunes and saltmarsh, a woodland unit and a river plus river valley. Each will need different management.

- 2. 'Functional' units**

Units are devised based on their predominant function. For example, recreational, cultural, hunting, archaeological, historical, infrastructural, residential and commercial use would all be valid units.

A separate 'sub plan which nests with the whole site plan could be produced for each unit, in which part or all of the management plan format could be repeated.

4.2.2 Management Zones

The process of unitisation should not be confused with the splitting of a site into management "zones" which is, in most cases the division of a site into temporary sections for management purposes. Its use is optional.

Zoning for management is the division of a nature conservation site and neighbouring lands into a number of sectors. For each management zone prescriptions will be determined. The prescriptions are short descriptions of:

- the location of the zone (or zones, if there is more than one sector requiring similar management)
- the relevant strategy(ies)
- a time element of the implementation of the prescriptions.

Within each zone the management prescriptions will be reasonably uniform and will differ in type or intensity from the other zones in the plan. When a management project has been implemented, some zones may then be recombined with other ones. A new project may require the delimitation of a new zonation of the site.

There are many different types of zoning systems, based on various criteria for example zoning according to management intensity (e.g. maintenance vs. restoration management).

It is important to keep the zoning system as simple as possible. Not all zones of a zonation system need to be present on all sites and some sites are so homogenous that they do not require zoning at all.

Managers should only zone sites where they find that it reduces the complexity of management and makes the task easier. A zonation system can also be used to inform all involved parties about management aims.

4.2.3 Buffer zones

Often there is a need to protect the site from damaging factors originating outside the site which leads to the setting up of buffer zones around the (most vulnerable parts of the) site.

In buffer zones control of activities are usually exercised indirectly, by management agreements or planning law. If a buffer zone around a site is not possible, part of the site itself may buffer the most fragile parts of the site. See example below.

Example zoning system

Zone A: Natural zone

Areas of high conservation value which require little or no intervention. Some activities such as research may be carried out, where these do not interfere with the primary objectives.

Usually the highest conservation interest is concentrated in these areas and these may demand resource inputs (e.g. purchase of land, prescriptions which do not allow for exceptions, compensation). Monitoring of the zone is essential to detect any negative factors or changes as soon as possible.

Two cases can be distinguished:

1. Non-intervention areas (1A): these might be wilderness areas which have not been altered by human intervention, or (secondary) habitats where the objective is to allow successional changes.
2. Areas with qualified (limited) intervention (2A): these are semi-natural habitats where the traditional management practices, which led to their development are still in use or have been re-established. These activities maintain the natural values of the zone.

Zone B: Active management zone

Areas of high conservation value where high management input is needed to rehabilitate, restore or create nature conservation values. Often there are great inputs when an area has to be re-established. Such interventions are usually time and resource consuming. Usually after recovery, such an area requires only maintenance management (and it can be re-zoned as an area with limited intervention). Successful management of B zones often converts them into A zones.

Sub-types may include:

1. Habitat manipulation areas
Here the objective is to restore, rehabilitate or create valuable habitats, by active intervention. Degraded or damaged areas are designated for re-establishment. The long-term objective is to upgrade the natural value of these areas.
2. Species manipulation areas
Action-plans in favour of rare/protected species, or to eradicate or control invasive species are planned for these areas. Some modern use, favourable to the conservation values or not affecting them might be allowed (e.g. extensive farming or Eco-tourism).

Zone C: Intensive use zone
<p>Areas of low conservation value managed for objectives other than nature conservation, but which are an important part of a nature conservation site. Public reception facilities, footpaths, maintenance of cultural, archaeological, historical areas, nature reserve infrastructure and residential areas should be considered here.</p> <p>Some areas of intensive use, which will be restored in the long run (e.g. conifer plantations to be converted into deciduous woodlands after harvesting) are also included in this zone.</p> <p>The level of intervention in this zone is lower than in the others.</p>
Zone D: Buffer zone
<p>Areas outside the site, which have the role to protect sites of nature conservation interest from threats originating outside. These zones are particularly important in those cases where vulnerable zone A or B areas are situated near the boundary and external damaging factors may affect them.</p> <p>In the buffer zones low-key management agreements or legal restrictions (e.g. planning policies) should be implemented.</p> <p>Note</p> <p>Any zone used to separate and protect a vulnerable zone from another is a buffer. For example, zone B can act as a buffer between A-zones and C-zones). It is often the case that sites will need intermediate areas between management zones to serve as buffers between mutually exclusive management regimes. For example between an area zoned as C where public use is prominent and an area zoned as B where species management programmes involving culls are necessary</p>

4.3 Projects

The action needed to deliver the operational objectives should be identified. Each action is called a project and there should be a clear link to an operational objective. Some projects may contribute to the accomplishment of more than one operational objective

Projects are the basis for the control and forecast of costs and the reporting and reviewing of the work done. They can be described and presented on paper but the way in which the project information is presented should be designed so that it can be stored on an information management system. This means that computer software could be used to allow analysis and reporting on the projects. For example, managers may want to know how much time has been spent each year carrying out a specific management project or whether it is more cost effective to use 'in-house' staff for certain tasks or to use contractors. If designed well, computerised storage systems can help you answer complex questions such as this, particularly on large sites or even on a number of sites under a manager's control. A system of codes for the identified projects linked to operational objectives is helpful in this respect.

Projects and tasks can be assigned a priority rating so that those which are essential to achieve the most important objectives are given preference.

Each project should have a project sheet or check list containing:

- Project title and code
- Relevant operational objectives and strategies
- Project priority, based on that of the operational objective
- Location of project within the site
- Project start and end date
- Method of operation
- Person responsible for doing the work
- Project cost over time
- Equipment required, at what time and for how long
- Space for reporting progress
- Method of reviewing the project
- Health and safety requirements and any other legal or organisational policy affecting the workers and others on site

4.4 Work plans

When the operational objectives, strategies, projects and priorities have been determined, then a work plan for the entire period of the plan or on an annual basis is prepared.

A work plan covering the full period of the plan should make clear what is expected to be achieved over specific periods of the plan and how much it will cost. These plans can provide the basis for the allocation of resources and can prove useful when comparing their distribution across a number of sites.

Before the start of each financial year a detailed cost programme is prepared by the manager which should be based upon the resource allocation received, i.e. how much money and human resources he can 'spend'. The preparation of this programme will immediately highlight shortfalls in resources and allow the manager to make a decision about which planned projects it will not be possible to achieve in that year.

Another advantage of this process is that at any time of the year, managers and their supervisors will be able to consult the project sheets to check on progress towards the annual plan and if necessary take corrective action which will ensure that priority objectives are achieved.

5. Review

Introduction

It is important to review the management plan on a regular basis so that those responsible for a site are well informed on whether or not all the objectives and targets are being achieved efficiently and effectively. The frequency and scope of these reviews will vary from site to site, and so this should be clearly stated in the management plan. The reviews should take place and be evaluated within the life of the plan.

Normally, a plan is reviewed on an annual basis and given a more in-depth review after a longer period (usually 5 years). For the first plan for a site, the in-depth review should take place earlier than for those sites where management and understanding are well-developed.

5.1 The annual review - progress towards objectives

A list of targets or performance indicators should be prepared as part of the plan before work starts so that at the end of the year the annual review can compare achievements against targets and their contribution to objectives and programmes.

For each project, a record of the work done, resources used and time taken should be kept and reviewed at the end of each year. However, regular review of project progress throughout the year is important as this allows resource shifting and re-prioritisation if necessary.

Difficulties in completing tasks or, in some cases even starting them, should be raised by the site manager immediately. In this way it may be easier to take corrective action or provide additional resources and develop a better understanding for future projects of the same sort.

Comments and complaints or suggestions made by visitors and others associated with the site should be logged and reviewed at least annually.

At the end of the year, work carried out during the course of the whole year needs to be reviewed against the objectives and programmes and performance targets. The quantity and quality of the work done and its achievements should be measured against both financial and manpower estimates to ensure that value for money has been achieved. For some organisations, this review is linked to an assessment of staff performance.

Another great advantage of the annual review is that it assists forward planning for the following year, so that uncompleted projects can be added in and tasks re-timed in the light of experience.

In order to help site managers with this process, *Eurosite* has developed a standard checklist. See page 4.15.

5.2 The five year review of the management plan

In most cases management plans are prepared for five year periods and set objectives which will take more than one year to achieve. To this end a review of objectives should be undertaken at the end of the five year period to assess whether they have been achieved, the costs involved and the benefits which have been built up. The management organisation may decide for complex sites, or for those with longer term habitat re-creation projects, for example, that five years is too soon to undertake this review. In this case, the review should take place within 10 years.

Normally, planning for the review should commence in the second half of the fourth year. However, the review period must be flexible and at the discretion of the manager who may wish to undertake a review earlier than planned if internal or external changes are taking place which might affect the objectives for the site.

Following the five to ten year review it will probably be desirable to produce a complete revision of the plan. In any event this will be necessary after a ten year period as more detailed descriptive information will be available. During the ten year time scale it is very unlikely that all the major political, social, economic and ecological forces affecting the site will have remained static.

There may be occasions when a specific area of or subject in the plan needs review. This would then need to be undertaken carefully especially if there is cross-linkage to other areas of the plan where the objectives may be affected.

External and internal situations may alter, especially if the political or economic climate has changed. It is important to assess such changes and consider the effect upon the site.

Each objective should be considered and assessed critically every five to ten years. A record of the assessment should be kept and any decisions made (e.g. to continue with the objective or to modify it) should be recorded and appropriately approved. It is important to recognise that some management may be experimental in nature and that the objectives for the reserve or other parts of the plan may change as a consequence of this approach.

With time, or as external or internal forces change, it may be necessary to move from one strategy to another. A review of strategies should be made at least once every five years alongside the review of objectives or earlier if there is a major change in circumstances.

Glossary

Audit/ Assessment	a critical examination of the performance of the plan or a part of the plan, so as to measure the quality of the management plan and its implementation, carried out by the management organisation (internal audit) or by an independent authority not directly associated with the site (external audit), usually at the invitation of the management organisation.
Constraint	an activity, factor or action which can prevent the site manager from achieving the ideal objectives.
Evaluation	an assessment of available information leading to an informed ranking or valuing of the items.
Ideal objective	statement of aims which sets the 'ideal' management of the site if there were no constraints or modifiers, and if the management organisation had complete control over the site. Usually begins with the word 'To'. Visionary, unconstrained – cf. Operational Objective.
Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Controlling the processes within the site preferably in accordance with a management plan. Can be doing work and/or doing nothing.2. The practical implementation of the management plan.3. Undertaking any task or project identified in the management plan, including the identification of new opportunities.
Modifier	an activity, factor or action which can prevent the site manager from attaining the ideal objectives. Modifiers usually have a neutral or positive effect.
Monitoring	the systematic collection of data or information over time using the same methodology, which aims to ascertain the extent of compliance with a standard or baseline, predetermined by survey. In practice, used to check the 'health', quantity or quality of a habitat or species.
Operational objective	ideal objective altered by the real world's constraints and modifiers. A realistic or operational aim that the site manager strives to achieve within the given circumstances, constraints and modifiers influencing management.
Ownership	belonging to; feeling a strong sense of empathy. In a management planning sense, views, opinion usually expressed in a document, report or plan. Not literally ownership of land or things.

Glossary

Priority setting	the ranking of objectives, strategies, programmes or projects in order of relative importance to aid decision making should resources (financial, technological and manpower) be limited
Programme	a group of projects which deliver a specific operational objective over time.
Project	<p>a unit of work with time, cost and quality specified which can be costed separately. Sometimes called a task.</p> <p><i>Note, the term project is also used to mean a larger scale series of activities e.g. the Birds of the Atlantic Façade Life Project. Use in the context of management planning is therefore open to confusion.</i></p>
Review	an evaluation of the effectiveness of all or part of a management plan in achieving the stated objectives. Normally undertaken by staff of the organisation responsible for management – cf Audit/Assessment.
Site	the site is the area covered by a management plan. It can vary in size from less than a hectare to a large National Park covering many square kilometres. The term is used synonymously with area.
Site potential	the possibilities for the site in ecological, social, cultural and/or economic terms. Useful to bear in mind when the site manager is setting his/her ideal objectives
SMART	<p>a method of assessing whether objectives can be linked to outcomes and products over time.</p> <p>Stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timescale</p>
Stakeholder	third person body or group with a legitimate interest or 'stake' in the management of a natural site. Examples – private landowners association, hunting club, regional park authority, sport society, open spaces society etc.
Strategy	a course of action or a broad approach towards achieving an objective. The general thrust of management towards achieving an objective.
Surveillance	a series of surveys to ascertain the extent of variability and/or range of values for particular parameters.

Glossary

Survey	an exercise through which a series of qualitative observations such as the distribution, quality, density and frequency of natural features are made in order to produce an assessment of the situation on a natural site.
Unit	a subdivision of a site, based on different criteria. Usually permanent (or for at least the life of the initial plan).
Work plan	A plan of action for a specific period of time (usually at least a year and not more than five years), which contains several projects or programmes (cf). All projects for a year or more form the work plan.
Zoning	<p>the division of a natural site (and often adjacent land) into a number of parts which are called zones or sometimes sectors and which are used for management purposes. Usually temporary (duration is less than the life of the initial plan).</p> <p>Within each zone the management prescriptions will be reasonably uniform and will differ in type or intensity from the other zones in the plan. They can also relate to legislative or political areas within a Park or natural area</p>

Section 4: Audit

This EUROSITE Guide for 'Site Conservation Assessments', and the "Site Conservation Assessment Format" included in it, are the result of the work of a EUROSITE working group chaired by Patrick Warner of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Ireland, and Judit Kelemen of the Kiskunság National Park, Hungary. This report has been edited by Peter Hoogstaden.

The format has been tested on several occasions on sites in Hungary, Ireland and The Netherlands. Special gratitude is expressed here to the managers of the Meynweg National Park (Netherlands) and the Wicklow National Park (Ireland) where two extensive testing sessions were carried out.

Thanks also to the members of the working party gathered in the Wicklow Mountains National Park, in May 1996, for their useful suggestions.

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European Guide for the Preparation and Implementation of

Site Conservation Assessments ('Audits')

for protected and managed
natural and semi-natural areas

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May 1996

Wicklow Mountains NP

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Foreword

by Peter Schofield

*Honorary vice-president of EUROSITE,
chairman of the working group on 'Management Plans'*

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the latest publication from Eurosite, the "*European Guide for the Preparation and Implementation of Site Conservation Assessments for protected and managed natural and semi-natural areas*".

The guide is compiled by a working group, whose members are from Hungary, Ireland, The Netherlands and the UK, aided by a number of persons from 5 different countries. They have given site managers and their organisations an excellent and logical methodology for assessing their performance against objectives, and for comparing best practice across Europe.

The guide will assist those responsible for the biodiversity and sustainable management of natural and semi-natural sites, embracing social, cultural, and economic use, as well as their development for education, science and demonstration where appropriate.

Following publication of Eurosite's "*European Guide for the Preparation of Management Plans for protected and managed natural and semi-natural areas*" in 1992, the first priority was to establish wide use of this guide and its format for site management plans. In part 4 of the Eurosite Management Plan Format we recognised the need for reviews of progress to see if management was meeting its targets and to see if commitments were being met efficiently, effectively and economically.

Now, thanks to the present working group's deliberations and their testing of the methods proposed, we have such a tool, which will increase the professionalism of those managing and responsible for natural and semi-natural areas.

Note on the 1999 revision

Since this Foreword to the 1996 report was written, the Eurosite audit format has been tested and used in many locations throughout Europe with great success. So much so that the work of the 1999 working group who had the task of reviewing and revising the existing audit guidance was limited to making the link with the new management planning guidance.

The guidance herein is substantially the same as the 1996 version and on behalf of the group I hope that it continues to stand as a robust code of practice for some time to come.

Philip Eckersley, Editor
September 1999

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Introduction

by Judit Kelemen and Patrick Warner

It is now generally accepted that there is a need for standardised management planning and a need for comparability of information between managers of protected areas throughout Europe. Site managers need a straight forward and easy to use plan format, which can be used regardless of the legal status, the size or the socio-economic context of the protected site.

Against this background the Eurosite Management Plan Format was developed, and it has been used successfully ever since by managers of different sites in many countries. Following feedback from these managers and their organisations managing natural and semi-natural areas, a further need was identified for the development of a auditing/ review format. This need was also felt because of the international regulations which apply to many sites (Bern, Bonn, Birds & Habitats Directives), and the compliance to one of the IUCN categories, based on management objectives.

'Site Conservation Assessment', or Auditing, is a tool for reviewing management, preferably under a management plan, by assessing the performance of the managing organisation of the site. It is desirable to critically examine the achievements and the effects of management from time to time. Such 'audits' can be carried out by staff of the managing organisation, or they can be carried out by experts or authorities from outside the managing organisation.

The Eurosite Site Conservation Assessment Format was developed on a similar philosophy to the Eurosite Management Plan Format: it is a simple, flexible, user-friendly tool which can be used in everyday management work to update the working plans. The form is designed in a way that both site managers from each organisation can use it for their 'internal assessments' and 'external auditors' can use it for assessment of 'foreign' sites. A training module based on the Eurosite Site Conservation Assessment Format has also been developed, to train experienced managers in assessing other European sites, and to teach site managers the basics of site conservation assessment. The audit form is available in paper form and also in a computer version.

The format has been tested on several occasions on sites in Hungary, Ireland and The Netherlands. Two extensive three day testing sessions have been done: the first in the Meynweg National Park (Netherlands) in 1995 and in May 1996 a last testing has been done in the Wicklow National Park (Ireland). Thanks to useful suggestions of all involved, the format is now ready for publication and use, although of course continuous improvements will be made also in the future.

The form is designed to be partly completed by the local manager, who either fills in the factual sections or helps the auditor to do so, and by the auditor, who completes the rest of the form (comment and evaluation). The ideal process is a very close cooperation between auditor and local manager. If this is not feasible, then the auditor may complete the form alone. The basic requirement for successful auditing however, is that the auditor should be sympathetic and empathetic to the local conservation effort. The audit is a means to support and stimulate 'best management practice' for European nature; it is a 'management planning and implementation assistance' activity.

Different types of Site Conservation Assessments

A site conservation assessment or audit can be needed (and commissioned) for a variety of reasons, therefore the approach and format must be flexible enough to cover all of them. It should also be possible to use the format in different ecosystems and protection categories, management regimes, management policies, and last, but not least, for the assessment of site management carried out by different types of managing organisations (Governmental bodies, NGO's, local authorities, etc.). The flexibility which is typical of Eurosite (well demonstrated in the management plan format) should also be the basis of this activity.

In some cases the auditor is required to comment only on the implementation of management plans and not on the plans themselves (*passive audit*). In other cases he/she may be required to make recommendations for changes to plans and/or policies and to actively introduce new practices by acting as a sort of management consultant (*active audit*, or '*review*'). In many cases an audit may be 'active' in some aspects only. It is important to identify which approach is being used and to treat the questions in the format on this basis.

Audits can be carried out by staff of the managing organisation (*internal audit*), usually on an annual basis, or they can be carried out by experts or authorities from outside the managing organisation (*external audit*).

The internal audit may incorporate financial inspections in accordance with the relevant organisational or local rules. There might also be a need for a special safety audit, especially where visitors are allowed on the site. Working practices also need checking against legal requirements and 'good working practices'.

The external audit is a valuable tool which assists the managing organisation in maintaining, improving performance or which confirms that existing management is comparable with the latest national or international standards. The audit may be commissioned by national or international bodies, therefore it should be done in accordance with the appropriate national /organisational policy ('house policy').

In some cases the commissioning body will require the audit to be done in accordance with international regulations, directives or laws (e.g. the European Union's Birds Directive). The audit form presented in this document may be used as the starting point of a financial audit required by law or by the funding agencies.

Assessing management effectiveness

This is where the effectiveness of management is assessed by the managing organisation or by an outside body for the following reasons:

- to see if management is meeting its targets;
- to enable the organisation to sustain or improve performance;
- to enable the organisation to detect best practice and promulgate it;
- to see if commitments are being met.

Assessing management effectiveness is very important and it is a task and duty of all organisations. There should be a constant search for better ways to manage for nature and a constant looking at performance and effectiveness.

However, in some cases there has to be an external (national or international) overview of the management practices, because for example there are obligations in (inter-)national law to perform certain tasks. Under the Habitats Directive, for example, member states are obliged to ensure the 'ecological needs' of habitats or the 'favourable conservation status of the sites'. This ideally should be done in a standard way on all sites of all member states.

Assessing management suitability (plans or objectives)

This is where the organisation wants to confirm that the actions proposed within a plan are in accordance with laws or policies. It can be of either or both of the following types:

- assessing if the management prescriptions are within the house policy of the organisation and if these are proper for the site;
- assessing whether the objectives are proper for the international requirements (i.e. IUCN categories, Habitats and Birds Directive prescriptions, Ramsar Convention).

Performance assessment of a specified project or programme (financial assessment included)

This is the situation where a funding organisation wants confirmation that it is getting the results it is paying for e.g.:

- international bodies funding conservation work (e.g. World Bank);
- (government) agencies funding conservation work by other bodies;
- internal audit for cost-efficiency carried out by the headquarters of an organisation.

Assessing quality of management for awards

When different sites are competing for recognition as best examples or for funding on this basis: - International organisations designate sites under different criteria and need professional assessment of the performance of the management (e.g. the Council of Europe's European Diploma and Biogenetic Reserves, or the Biosphere Reserves of the UNESCO's MAB-programme). A standardised assessment practice could be welcomed by both parties;

- There are various awards (like the Eurosite Award for best management practice), which have to judge different management activities/projects.

Finally

There are many approaches to reviewing/auditing, as well as to the choosing of the 'best' management practice while writing up the plan. At its core this activity is a dialogue between a site manager and someone who understands his/her problems. The key approach is to be, and to be seen as, a help not an outside interference. This is easier in passive audits than when doing a more active one, but the auditor should always try to aim for 'user friendliness'.

The terms 'audit' and 'conservation audit' may have negative connotations in some cases which is why 'site conservation assessment' is used as an alternative. This exercise must not be seen as a control coming 'from above', but as a way to achieve the best possible results in nature conservation, sharing information throughout Europe, within the available resources - in other words basically to fulfil the mission of conservation and of organisations like Eurosite.

Guidelines for the Completion of the Site Conservation Assessment Form

General

The ideal site conservation assessment is a very close cooperation between auditor and local manager ("conversation for conservation"). If this dialogue is to be successful, it is necessary for at least some of the assessment team to be familiar with the conservation problems of the type of site audited and the culture of the country (cf. annex "Code of Practice").

Managers whose sites will be audited should be familiar with the full Site Conservation Assessment Form (provided by Eurosite or the auditor).

It is possible for the audit team to complete the form without local input -and it may even be necessary, if, for example, there is no local management team-, but this is not as valuable an exercise as the 'dialogue assessment'.

Structure of the Format

The Eurosite "Site Conservation Assessment format" is presented as a series of sections, each with a 'Main Question' and sub-questions, which the auditor should address in the course of an assessment. Each section starts on a separate page. Most questions and sub-questions are designed to be answered by options, normally yes or no. The relevant answer should be underlined.

In these guidelines an edited version of the full "Site Conservation Assessment format" is included. The sections/questions are presented in the form of the blank audit form, completed with information concerning what the auditor is supposed to fill in below the questions. This allows for comparison afterwards of different site conservation assessments carried out by different persons.

After answering all the questions of the format, the auditor should list the developments or trends expected in the site. These should be listed in approximate priority with significant deviations from the ideal objectives noted and comments attached. This should be followed by the list of the recommended changes. The last section is the auditor's overall comment.

Structure of the Sections

Each section includes the following subsections:

- The "*Questions*": the information here is provided by the site manager(s), who also provide(s) the relevant documents.

- The "*Notes*": contains helpful information designed for the local manager who may be helping to fill in the form, including references to the relevant section of the 1996 version of the "Eurosite Management Plan format" (or the plan format used on the site being audited).

- "*Additional information*": here either the auditor, or the local manager should fill in further details concerning the relevant additional information which is available. Is specified in the guidelines or notes for each question.

- "*Auditor's comments*": a sub-section provided for the auditor to record his/her opinion about a situation ('assessment of a situation').

- In the "*Evaluation*" the auditor should give an overall evaluation of the situation raised by each question (main question plus all sub-questions) in the form of a score, summarising the written comment above. A score is given both for performance and for relevance (see below).

- The space for "*Manager's comments*" is for the local site manager to use, after the rest has been completed. It can be used for further explanation, agreement, rebuttal or contradiction of the auditor's comments and evaluation.

Table of Scores

The recommended system of scoring in the evaluation section "Performance" (what the results of the management are) is shown below:

- ++ Excellent performance / Important benefit**
(This score should be given when the situation described approaches the best achievable realisation of the objectives)
- + Some benefit**
(This describes the situation where the objectives will be realised, but either not completely, or not by the best method)
- 0 Neutral**
(The situation described has no impact on the realisation of the objectives, either positive or negative)
- Poor but tolerable performance**
(The situation described is worse than the planned outcome, but at least some part of the objectives are going to be achieved)
- Unsatisfactory**
(The situation is unacceptable from the point of view of realisation of the objectives)
- ? Insufficient information available**
(the auditor cannot make an evaluation on the basis of the available information).

The scores for "Relevance" (how important that is to the achievement of the general conservation objectives...) will follow the following format:

- ++ Very relevant**
- + Relevant**
- 0 Irrelevant**

Examples of Evaluation scores

1. In a situation where an organisation does not have a written management plan, but is managing a site in accordance with clear house policies, which cover all eventualities:

the performance score is "-", because the question refers to the existence of a written management plan; and the relevance is "+", as the results are achieved, but not by the best method:

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score
3	-	+

2. In a situation where under the question referring to the description of the site, the management plan included no data on birds, but the site is only of importance for mosses, then there is a significant failure of performance, but it is not relevant: since 6/i (birds) is a matter which has no relevance to the achievement of the planned objectives the reply to question 6 overall is excellent, in both categories. As an evaluation to subsection 6/i, the performance is unsatisfactory, but irrelevant.

Auditing format's questions

The format includes the following questions to be addressed by the auditor:

1. What is the structure of the organisation that is responsible for the management of the site?
2. Are there management policies which are relevant to the site ?
3. Is there a management plan which is relevant to the site ?
4. How was the site selected and the boundaries chosen ?
5. What national and international designations does the site hold ?
6. Is the site described in detail, adequate for its management ?
7. Has there been a systematic evaluation of the information available ?
8. Are there ideal management objectives for the site ?
9. Are the constraints which to reach these objectives identified?
10. Are there operational management objectives for the site ?
11. Is the site zoned for management purposes ?
12. Are there management strategies for each objective?
13. Are there sufficient legal powers to implement the strategies?
14. Has the planned management had to change within the plan period ?

After answering the questions, the developments or trends expected in the site should be listed by the auditor. These should be listed in approximate priority with significant deviations from the ideal objectives noted and comments attached.

This should be followed by the list of the recommended changes to the following factors: policy, resources (staff, finances, others), information (research needed), objectives (ideal and operational), strategies and management practices.

The last section is the auditors overall comment on the following issues:

- is there a reasonable future prediction of achievement of each objective ?
- has the planned management had to change within the period of the plan ?
- does the site require significant alterations to management regime, including objectives ?
- does the policy and infrastructure require review or change ?

Title Page

SITE NAME:

LOCATION:

REGION:

COUNTRY:

Include longitude, latitude and map coordinates. Region means administrative region of the organisation managing the site.

SITE CODE:

REGION CODE:

COUNTRY CODE:

Codes refer to any generally used system of site identification in use in the area, if any exists. State what the system is and who operates it.

SITE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION(S) /(AUDITED BODY):

The site management organisation stated should be the body being audited. In situations where there are more than one organisation managing the site the audit will have been commissioned to cover all or just some of them. The names of any managing organisations other than those audited should be noted on this page.

AUDIT COMMISSIONED BY:

IN ACCORDANCE WITH

The audit may be commissioned by national or international bodies, therefore it should be done in accordance with the appropriate national / organisational policy also referred to as "house policy" in the Eurosite management plan format. In some cases the commissioning body will require the audit to be done in accordance with international regulations, directives or laws (e.g. EU Birds Directive). This section states the basic policy parameters the auditor must accept when making his evaluation and which (s)he may not change. If (s)he finds problems with the constraints imposed by this policy it must be reported on the final comment sheet.

LAST AUDIT DATE(S) AND REFERENCES:

List all audits, evaluations or 'quality controls' carried out in the past, both the internal and external audits, the passive and the active audits.

AUDIT DATE:

AUDITOR IN CHIEF /AUDIT TEAM:

The auditor in chief and the auditing team have to include names, addresses, qualifications and employing organisation, and state which sections were contributed by each team member.

Summary

The auditor should provide a (half) page summary of his/her findings. Here no reference should be made to individual management practices, but a general impression of the overall site management should be given. In some cases the suitability of the management plan for the site can be discussed, then reference should be made to (strategy) documents of a higher order should be made.

0. Overall Structure of the Organisation responsible for the Management of the Site

N.B. Three levels of 'overall structure' are listed, only those appropriate to the organisation should be completed. The first level is the entire organisation (eg. National Authority, National NGO, regional NGO, or international organisation), the second is the regional level (if appropriate), the third is the local (site) level, which is dealt with under a separate question heading (Question 1). Information about (supra-)national and regional levels is considered as 'background information' to understand how an organisation functions and why sites are managed in a specific way. This section is not given an evaluation score.

a. Name:

If more than one organisation is directly involved in managing the site for conservation and there is no central coordinating body then all of them should be described on a separate sheet but only one evaluation made. If there is a coordinating body, usually that one should be the one audited. The audit may, however, be commissioned to cover only one of the managing bodies.

b. Type of organisation:

The type of the organisation should be stated as:

- GO (governmental organisation), national, regional or local;
- NGO (non-governmental organisation) international, national, regional or local;
- other (please specify).

c. Are there aims / principles / charter ? Yes / no

If there are aims / principles / charter please attach a copy. Please state if there are any restrictions on its publication.

d. How many staff are employed by the organisation ?

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Field</u>	<u>Technical</u>	<u>Administration</u>
--------------	--------------	------------------	-----------------------

Staff

Volunteers

- Field staff means all those employees involved in physically managing sites
- Technical staff includes the managers of the field staff and the scientists, and their managers
- Administration staff covers office based administrative workers.
- All temporary or part time staff are calculated back to full time staff equivalent, on the basis of hours worked.
- Volunteers are people contributing to the organisation's work, without payment, also this should be calculated back to full time equivalent.

e. Do they have a suitable range of skills ? Good/ satisfactory/ poor

The auditor should assess the staff of the managing organisation from the point of view of achieving the objectives of the management plan. In some cases the necessary skills may be on contract.

f. What is the organisations annual budget ? ECU:

For standardisation, all budget should be given in ECU's as well as in local currency. The budget means the sum for the last complete financial year.

g. Land holding: ha

This should include all land managed totally or partly by the organisation, including leased land or land under management agreement.

h. Membership: persons

Only to be filled in for NGO's. Give approximate total numbers.

REGIONAL or BRANCH

i. How many staff are employed by the regional branch of the organisation ?

Staff Field Technical Administration

Staff

Volunteers

j. What is the region's annual budget ? ECU:

k. Land holding: ha

See also (g).

l. Branch membership:

See also (h).

Notes

See paragraphs 1.1, 2.1, 2.3 of the *Eurosite* management plan format.

Additional information

1. Structure of the (local) site management organisation

a. How many staff are employed at the site ?

Staff Field Technical Administration

Staff

Volunteers

b. What is the site's annual budget ?

Income (local currency) ECU

Expenditure (local currency) ECU

At local level, expenditure and income sums should be given separately. It should be clearly stated if the local site is allowed to keep the income for their own use.

c. What is the size of the site ? ha

d. What equipment is available on site ?

List major items, eg. tractors, computers major items of capital equipment.

e. What are the buildings on the site ?

List major items, eg. headquarters, offices, visitor centre(s), garage, stables.

Notes

See paragraphs 2.1, 2.3 of the management plan format.

Additional information

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

N.B. For the sections "Notes", "Additional Information", "Auditor's comment", "Evaluation" and "Manager's comment" refer to the general section (page 13).

2. Management policy relevant to the site

a. Is there a management policy which is relevant to the site ? Yes / No

No reference should be made here to the site management plan (see question 3), but to policies of a higher order. The management policy is separate from the management plan (although usually included in the plan), therefore the two issues have to be treated under separate questions. Management policy may be the mission statement of an international body (eg. IUCN, BirdLife International), the prescriptions of an international convention/directive (eg. Habitats Directive, Ramsar Convention) and in the case of national bodies it can be national law or the house policy of an organisation (as described in the Eurosite management plan format, paragraph 0.1). It may also include the policies of other organisations who's work has an impact on the nature conservation management of the site (eg. a water authority, a recreational body).

b. Is the policy written ? Yes / No

In the situation where the policy is not in written form, it has to be recorded at meetings with relevant people. The relevant minute(s) of the meeting should be included.

c. Is the policy circulated to all staff and involved parties ? Yes / No

A copy of the management policy statement must be obtained by the auditor and included as an appendix. Please state if there are any restrictions on publication.

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 1.1, 2.4, 2.13 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

Summarise the relevant policies or include them entirely in the annexes. Where there are other organisations involved, state their statutory powers.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

3. Management Plan(s)

a. **Is there a Management Plan which is relevant to the site ?** Yes / No

b. **Is it written ?** Yes / No **Date:**

In situations where the plan is not in written form, the significant parts of it (ideal and operational objectives, constraints and strategies, house policy if different from the commissioned one) have to be recorded at meetings with relevant people. The relevant minute(s) of the meeting should be included. Are relevant documents formally approved?

c. **Is it circulated to all staff and involved parties ?** Yes / No

A copy of the management plan must be available to the auditor. If the plan is not available in English or French (Eurosite's working languages), at least the significant parts (see above) should be translated and attached.

d. **To what format is the plan ?**

Indicate the format used (eg. Eurosite, NCC, Staatsbosbeheer).

Notes

The whole Eurosite management plan format is relevant.
Significant paragraphs would be 1.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5

Additional information

In the situation in which there is an agreed plan, which is not in written form, or it is included in regional plans or physical plans, the form it is in should be stated here.

List also management plans of other organisations which are relevant to the site.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

4. Site selection and definition of boundaries

a. How was the site selected ?

Is its selection backed by national or international designation (recognised and endorsed in the (inter-)national legislation, eg. SPA, SAC, Ramsar site, National Park). Was there a survey of sites, give details. What were the national criteria (flowchart?).

b. How were the site boundaries chosen ?

Were the boundaries chosen for ecological reasons or other practical reasons (eg. resource constraints, impact constraints)? Are the boundaries of the site relevant in that they permit effective conservation of the resource on site. Is the site big enough to conserve the special features?

c. Are the site boundaries identifiable on the ground ? Yes / No

Indicate how: marker posts, fences, abrupt change in land use, etc.: additional information.

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.11, 2.13, 2.17 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

How are the boundaries marked / visible on the ground (eg. marker posts, fencelines or land-use types). Can the boundaries be identified on the ground by all relevant parties, including the farmers and public. If there are accurate maps showing the boundaries, include a copy of them.

Do they know what the boundary-markers mean? Were there recent changes in the boundaries (cf. question 12)?

Refer to the date of creation of the protected site, and / or national and international designations.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

5. National and International designations

a. Does the site hold any national designations ? Yes/No

b. International ? Yes/No

List all national and international designation under additional information. Give details of classification and dates. In the case of international designation, state whether the treaty has been ratified or not.

Notes

Refer to paragraph 2.2 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

IUCN - category equivalent:

Because of great variety of designations between countries, the IUCN category should be stated for all sites (from the UN lists for sites already categorised, otherwise select the appropriate category from the list below):

- Category I: Strict nature reserve/ wilderness area:
 - I.a. Areas managed mainly for science
 - I.b. Areas managed mainly for wilderness protection
- Category II: National Parks: Areas managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
- Category III: Natural monument: Areas managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
- Category IV: Habitats/Species management: Areas managed mainly for conservation through management intervention
- Category V: Protected landscape/seascape: Areas managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation.
- Category VI: Managed resource protected areas: Areas managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

6. Site Description Details

Is the site described in detail adequate for management?

a.	Legal Status	Yes/No
b.	Management Infrastructure	Yes/No
c.	Climate	Yes/No
d.	Geology/Geomorphology	Yes/No
e.	Soils (& soil processes)	Yes/No
f.	Communities, biotopes, habitats	Yes/No
g.	Vegetation Structure	Yes/No
h.	Flora	Yes/No
i.	Fauna	Yes/No
j.	Current human use on site	Yes/No
k.	Socio-economic aspects affecting the site	Yes/No
l.	Aspects of Cultural Heritage	Yes/No
m.	Landscape and Aesthetic qualities	Yes/No

The headings in the Eurosite management plan are followed, as it is flexible enough to allow for any relevant information to be considered. Only information relevant to the identified management issues should be considered here. The heading NA ('not applicable') should be used in a situation where information on that subject is not needed for management at all.

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

Where the yes/no/not applicable answer is not sufficient, a review should be made of the available information. If the answer is no, describe what extra information will be needed.

Auditor's comment

Evaluate under this section the above information. If research is ongoing, to deal with deficiencies in information, note the fact and state when the information will be available. Indicate what new areas of study are needed.

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

7. Site Evaluation

a. Has there been a systematic evaluation of information available? Yes / No

Has the management team identified the key areas of information and the important characteristics of the site.

Notes

Refer to paragraphs no. 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

List the important characteristics of the site, the (inter-)national importance as well as the regional importance. This should follow the method used in the Eurosite management plan format ("*First Evaluation*"), if possible, considering the following attributes:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Ecological: | - fragility
- rarity
- naturalness
- typicality
- special interest
- size
- diversity
- stability / instability
- place of the site in the ecological structure |
| Social and economic: | - potential value
- international and national designations
- available date and recorded history. |

Any other system which produces similar results is also acceptable.

Auditor's comment

If no evaluation has been done by the management team, the auditor should do one and include it here.

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

8. Ideal Objectives

N.B. If there are no written management objectives for a site, take written minutes of a meeting with the managing organisation as a basis.

a. Are there ideal objectives for the site? Yes / no

These are the objectives the manager would strive for if he had complete control over the site and the activities and land-uses adjacent to the site. Sometimes called long-term objectives.

N.B. Not all types of management plans include a section on ideal objectives. The following (sub-)questions are based on the Eurosite Management Plan format.

b. Are the ideal objectives written and circulated? Yes / no

c. Do the objectives reflect the expectations of the policies? Yes / no

All the aspects of the policies of the organisation must be met by the objectives. There must be no conflict between any policy and any objective.

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 1.1, 3.2 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

In the absence of a management plan, attach a list of objectives and constraints, or a copy of the minutes of a meeting on the subject.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

9. Constraints or Modifiers

a. **Are the constraints identified?**

Yes /no

The constraints are factors which operate to prevent the ideal objectives being realised. Sometimes called threats. In certain cases the constraints can be confidential, as they can produce a negative image of nature conservation to other land use actors (e.g. farmers would not like to see themselves described as constraints..).

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 3.3, 3.4 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

In the absence of a management plan, attach a list of objectives and constraints, or a copy of the minutes of a meeting on the subject.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

10. Operational Management Objectives

N.B. If there are no written management objectives for a site, take written minutes, statements, etc. as a basis.

a. Are there operational objectives for the site? Yes / no

These are objectives which are practically achievable within the existing situation with the available resources. When the impact of the constraints on the ideal objectives is taken into account, the results are the operational objectives. Sometimes called short term objectives. These are basically the objectives to which all the management work is directly related. The site conservation assessment therefore concentrates mainly on the relation between management activities and operational objectives.

b. Are these objectives written and circulated? Yes / no

c. Are the operational objectives S.M.A.R.T. ? Yes / no

SMART stands for: Specific (i.e. not too vague), Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed (including a time scale for management operations).

d. Do the objectives meet the expectations of the policies? Yes / no

All the aspects of the policies of the organisation must be met by the objectives. There must be no conflict between any policy and any objective.

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 1.1, 3.4, 3.5 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

In the absence of a management plan, attach a list of objectives and constraints, or a copy of the minutes of a meeting on the subject.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

11. Management Zones

a. **Is the site zoned for management purposes ?** **Yes / no**

b. **Does the site require zoning ?** **Yes / no**

In the case of a heterogeneous, complex or large site which has different management objectives, particularly if these are conflicting with each-other (eg. wilderness conservation and recreation), a well defined zoning should exist on the site. The zoning may be based on ecological factors or other relevant managerial criteria.

c. **Are the zones identified on map ?** **Yes / no**

Refer back to the maps provided under question 4 or show maps under additional information below.

d. **Are they identifiable on the ground ?** **Yes / no**

If possible physical features should show the boundaries, but this may be impossible in some cases (eg. saline plains).

e. **Are they of adequate size ?** **Yes / no**

The zones identified must be large enough to allow the implementation of the objectives (in case of wilderness they are suggested to be larger than 500 ha).

f. **Are there buffer zones ?** **Yes / no**

Sometimes the 'house policy' of an organisation does not permit buffer zones. This should be mentioned.

Notes

Refer to paragraph 4.2 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

Record the criteria under which the zoning was done (intensity of management: zones A-B-C-D, or functional zoning: e.g. visitor management, shooting).

Provide maps if necessary.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

12. Management Strategies

This section is the core of the whole site conservation assessment process, where every aspect of the management is systematically considered. Here is assessed whether the management being carried out, leads to realising objectives.

The management organisation will have chosen for each operational objective (a number of) strategies to realise these objectives. The strategy(ies) is (are) the selected method of achieving the operational objective(s). If the strategies are clearly identified, they will fit one of the relevant headings 1 to 9 given below (*Notes* section). The implementation of the management is here assessed per objective.

A separate sheet should be used for each of the operational objectives (+ strategies addressing them). These sheets should have the following heading:

Sheet number: (out of).
Operational objective number and title:
Strategy Title(s):
Location zone / compartment:

N.B. One strategy can help realise more than one objective, whereas one objective can be addressed by more than one strategy. Where this is easier, the auditor can assess the management per strategy, with reference to the objective which is being addressed. Also -but less advisable- can the management be assessed per compartment, or management zone. If no operational objectives/strategies have been identified in the management plan (or a management plan is lacking), use the strategies listed below to clock progress on the site.

On each sheet for each operational objective the following questions should be answered:

a. Is there a strategy for the operational objective? Yes / no

b. Is it being implemented on the ground? Yes / no

Is there physical evidence of implementation of the strategy?

c.1. Is it showing progress towards achieving ideal objectives? Yes / no

c.2. Is the operational objective likely to be achieved in the period of the plan? Yes / no

What is the duration of the plan? When do site managers think to reach the objective?

d. Are management actions being recorded? Yes / no

Are the managers keeping systematic records of all relevant management operations.

e. Are the effects being monitored? Yes / no

Are changes in the biological / physical systems of the site, including both the impacts of management and natural processes being systematically recorded.

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5 and 5.1 of the Eurosite management plan format.

The operational objective details and corresponding strategies should be checked to ensure that all the relevant headings are covered. If not, the auditor(s) can insert missing detail and perform the assessment on the basis of what work is being done in the area.

REFERENCE STRATEGY TITLES

1. Habitat Conservation
Keywords: structure, interrelation, diversity, corridors, networks, zones.
2. Species Conservation
Keywords: populations, diversity, zones.
3. Pest Control
Keywords: adjacent land protection, conservation management, control exotic species
4. Recreation / Public Use
Keywords: zones, facilities, information, safety, impacts, public relations
5. Interpretation / Education
Keywords: schools, general public, user groups, local community
6. Research / Study
Keywords: management, applied, pure.
7. Estate Management
Keywords: agriculture, forestry, roads, boundaries, hunting, fishing, drainage
8. Landscape / Cultural
Keywords: historical, archeological, landscape
9. Infrastructure
Keywords: legal, staff, buildings, safety, equipment, training.

Additional information

In case of a lack of satisfactory progress, state the reasons for this.

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Strategy exists	Strategy implem.	Satisfactory Progress	Man. actions recorded	Monitoring	Performance Score	Relevance Score

N.B. This evaluation has to be done for each sheet. A 'Summary Table' of the achievement of strategies is included in the Final Evaluation.

N.B.2. The 'Performance Score' relates to the manager rather than to the site. If the manager has done everything within his power, the performance score will be "++", even if the progress towards objectives of the site is unsatisfactory.

Manager's comment

13. Nature Conservation Laws and Regulations

a. Is there an adequate body of national conservation law to implement the strategies?

Yes/No

b. Are there local bye-laws or regulations to implement the strategies ?

Yes/No

c. Are there adequate patrol staff or police?

Yes/No

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Additional information

Name the relevant national statutes.

Name the relevant local statutes.

State the number of patrol staff.

Auditor's comment

Comment on the level of law-enforcement and it's significance.

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

N.B. This question can be particularly relevant in case of international designations, lacking the legal underpinning in the national legislations.

14. Changes in the planned management

a. Has the planned management had to change within the plan period ? Yes / no

The original plan should be seen by the auditor. The reasons for the updating of the plan have to be evaluated against subquestions b-e.

b. Is the change significant ? Yes / no

Did the change involve altering the policy, (an) objective(s) (ideal and/or operational) or a major strategy?

c. What caused the change(s) ?

d. Has the plan been reviewed to take it into account ? Yes / no

Changes in one part of the plan usually have consequent effects elsewhere in the plan. Have all these changes been made in the plan.

e. Are all (management) staff aware of changes ? Yes / no

Notes

Refer to paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the Eurosite management plan format.

Possible causes of change are:

1. Changes within organisation
- eg. policy, objectives, strategy, management action, state of knowledge, staff attitudes;
2. Natural events
- eg. succession, fire, flood, pests,...;
3. Human induced change
- eg. pollution, recreation, industrial / housing development, fires, poaching,...

Additional information

Auditor's comment

Evaluation

Question N°	Performance score	Relevance score

Manager's comment

15. Final Evaluation (Summary of Evaluations)

The evaluation for all sections should be brought together in a "Summary Table", as below. In the evaluation column the score values given under each section's performance and relevance ratings should be listed.

<u>Section</u>	<u>Performance</u>	<u>Relevance</u>
1. Structure/ statute (local) management org.		
2. Management policy relevant to the site		
3. Management Plan(s)		
4. Site selection and definition of boundaries		
5. National and International designations		
6. Detailed description		
7. Systematic evaluation of available information		
8. Management Objectives for the Site		
9. Zonation		
10. Strategies for each (operational) objective:	1.	
	2.	
	3., etc.	
11. Legal powers		
12. Changes in the planned management		

N.B. For section 10: list all sub-section evaluations.

16. Expected Developments or Trends

In this section developments or trends expected in the site, or affecting the site should be listed. They can basically be divided in two types of developments: factors which the site manager can influence/handle and factors outside his power. Developments can be positively or negatively affecting the site; they should be listed in approximate priority. Significant deviations from the objectives should be noted and comments attached.

Developments

I. Within the site manager's power:

Positive developments:

Negative developments:

II. Outside the site manager's power:

Positive developments:

Negative developments:

Auditor's comment

This comment should include any significant deviation from operational objectives.

N.B. In case of an active audit: also note any significant deviation from ideal objectives.

Manager's comment

17. Recommended Changes

N.B. The terms of a passive audit will exclude recommendations being given for some of the following factors; normally only recommendations will be given about factors e. and f.

a.	Policy	Yes / no
b.	Resourcing	Yes / no
	- staff	Yes / no
	- finances	Yes / no
	- others	Yes / no
c.	Objectives	Yes / no
	- ideal	Yes / no
	- operational	Yes / no
d.	Strategies	Yes / no
e.	Information (research needed)	Yes / no
f.	(Implementation of) Management practices	Yes / no

Notes

Additional information

Auditor's comment

If the answer was yes to any of the above questions, these should be commented on here.

Manager's comment

18. Auditor's overall comment

In this section the auditor gives his/her overall impression of the management of the site, with special attention for the following points:

Is there a reasonable future prediction of achievement of each (operational) objective?

Will each objective/strategy be achieved within the time period of the original plan, will it be achieved completely or will it be significantly altered, what are the probabilities of success/failure. What security attaches to the provision of the necessary resources in future. If the objectives will not be achieved, why. What action is needed to remedy this.

New strategies, objectives or even policy should be developed for the site in case there is no reasonable future prediction of achievement. Where the objectives will not be achieved because of a failure to implement the plan, this should be stated with specific reasons (e.g. lack of specified resources or improper utilisation of existing resources).

Has the planned management had to change within the plan period?

Why has it had to change, is the change significant, is it likely to re-occur, does it reveal problems in resourcing or management. Were all relevant changes (eg in strategy/objectives/policies) carried through. Are all staff aware of the changes.

Does the site currently require (significant) alterations to the management regime (incl. objectives)?

Why does it need changes, to what areas, and what changes. Who should make them and what would be the cost. This is the part of the plan where the auditor makes recommendations (commented on by the manager) for any changes to management practice which he thinks are needed.

Do policy and infrastructure require review or change?

Why does it need changes, to what areas, and what changes. Who should make them and what would be the cost. This is the section where the auditor makes recommendations for any changes to the organisations structure or policies which (s)he thinks are needed.

Annexes

Code of Practice for Auditors

List of Contributors

Code of Practice for Auditors

Conflict of Interests

An auditor shall not undertake any case where h/she or any member of his/her immediate family or employing organisation are professionally involved in the management of the site or have been for the last 10 years.

An auditor shall not undertake any case where he/she or any member of his/her immediate family or current employer has any financial involvement in the outcome other than the agreed fees.

An auditor may not make any recommendation which would, if implemented, financially benefit him/herself, his/her immediate family or current employing organisation.

All fees and fringe benefits of an auditing contract must be declared to the audited organisation (and to Eurosite).

Language

The auditor must be able to communicate with all ranks of the audited organisation. Ideally he/she should be fluent in the relevant language(s). (In practice translating services may have to be employed.)

All members of a team of auditors should share and work in a single common language. Where ever possible Eurosite auditors will work in either French or English, the two official languages of Eurosite.

Relevant Expertise

The auditor must have a minimum of five years experience in nature conservation management. He/she must have experience of similar or relevant sites or habitats or of similar management regimes and practices.

In complex sites a single auditor should not attempt to deal with significant areas outside his/her expertise. A team of auditors reporting to the main contractor should be used in these cases.

An auditor should have experience of, or knowledge of a variety of management organisations, sites, cultures and levels of resourcing other than his or her own.

Fact Interpretation and Personal Opinions

The auditor will not be in a position to do original survey or research work and must accept the best information available from the client organisation.

Where interpretation of results is concerned the auditor is permitted to use his/her expertise, and may come to a different conclusion to that expressed in the plan; however they must conduct the audit as agreed with the commissioning body and act according to the type of audit (eg. not giving comments on the management objectives for the site, if this is not requested, even if the auditor believes them to be flawed).

Auditors are prohibited from using their position to advance personal opinions or untested personal theories.

Site Visits

The auditor (or all members of the audit team) must visit the site on the ground and make a personal inspection of all significant parts of the site. In the case of teams of auditors all members of the team will normally be expected to visit all parts of the site. This visit shall be made in such a manner that the management techniques and problems can be viewed directly. In the case of very large and uniform sites, examples of all relevant habitats only need be visited.

Contacts with the audited organisation

The parent organisation of the audited site should be contacted before the audit starts (in most cases this will be the organisation which commissioned the audit) and a written statement / copies should be obtained of:

- the organisation's policy on all matters relevant to this site;
- the management objectives and strategies for the site (as defined in the Eurosite management plan format);
- the management plan for the site.

Where this information is not available (e.g. where no written management plans exist), the auditor should request written statements of the current position of the organisation on these matters and should seek a meeting with senior officials to discuss and clarify it, and should record this meeting in writing.

The policy and objectives must be accepted by the auditor and the audit conducted within the parameters thus set, but h/she is permitted to comment on the limitations, if any, which that places on site management, subject to the type of audit agreed with the commissioning body (see above).

Contacts with the Site Manager and Field Staff

The auditor must meet the site manager(s) and local field staff (if any) including all who have management responsibility for the site and must discuss with them the practices they use and the problems they encounter. Where there is a team of auditors, all of the team must meet the site management staff.

The auditor must ensure that all the local staff understand his/her function and must ensure that the sections on the audit format for managers comments are filled in by the relevant people without undue pressure or influence.

If the auditor is unable to meet with the management staff or if they are refuse to cooperate he/she must not attempt to continue with the audit but should report back to his/her employer.

Only in very exceptional circumstances (e.g. where there is a possibility that local staff have been involved in dishonest or illegal practices) should an audit be completed without the cooperation of the local staff.

Where possible, a written statement of the existing problems should be given to the auditor.

Reports

The auditor's report should be made and submitted to the client in the format prepared by Eurosite, but information may also be presented in any other format requested by the client/ commissioning organisation.

The auditor's report should be made and submitted to the client as soon as possible after the site visit.

A copy of the report should be lodged with Eurosite unless there is a contractual prohibition of this.

Eurosite format reports should be made available in both the language normally spoken by the management staff and in one of the two Eurosite official languages (French or English).

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Section 5: Training

Training

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5.1 Why train?

More and more site managers and organisations involved in site management realise the need for, and benefits of, an effective management planning process and management plan. It is now generally accepted that there is a need for standardised management planning and inter-comparability of information between managers of protected areas throughout Europe especially in the international networks such as the Pan European Ecological network and the Natura 2000 series.

Writing a management plan can be an intimidating prospect and supportive tuition is usually welcomed. A training course will build up the confidence of those trained and shows them that there is nothing magical about the process of preparing a clear and effective management plan for a site.

Managers need a straight forward and easy to use plan format that can be used on a site whatever the legal status, size or socio-economic context. The *Eurosite* Management Plan Format was developed against this background in 1990 and managers of different sites in many countries have used it ever since. Following feedback from these managers and their organisations a third edition of the format has been produced (1999) and further needs were identified for training in management planning.

A small workshop was set up following the Council meeting of *Eurosite* (October 1994, Paris) to develop a package of training in management planning and auditing of management plans. The programme involved a large amount of expertise provided by the *Eurosite* members.

5.2 Who trains?

The network of *Eurosite* members - people who are experienced in practical site conservation management and management planning - are the trainers and are willing to share their experiences with other partners.

For training purposes, ad-hoc teams are set up, incorporating people who are not only good managers and experienced planners but who are also keen communicators and who can convey information easily and memorably to trainees. They must be able to overcome the language, cultural, legal, and other differences between their home organisation and that of the trainees. Experience of nature conservation in more than one country is therefore an advantage as is an open mind and a willingness to learn! It is desirable that at least one of the trainers should be from the host country/organisation who will have a special role in bridging any gaps between the trainer and trainees.

5.3 How to train - a strategy for training

Training requirements of organisations are very variable and the *Eurosite* training scheme has been designed to be able to deal with this. The most common requirements are training in management planning as a procedure and the use of the *Eurosite* Management Planning Format - see parts 1 and 2. This is primarily for site managers but there is also a need for more senior managers to have sufficient knowledge of the system and practice to sign off plans, allocate resources, and carry out reviews and internal audits.

To achieve this a series of approaches can be developed:

- Training Centres** Demonstration sites where training with proper training material, with existing (working!) management plans within *Eurosite* member organisations. It is desirable that such centres should be located in different countries with different languages.
- Bilateral training** by twinning sites where one partner has expertise in management planning, the partners can work together and produce management plans. This method can be very efficient because the whole planning procedure can be accomplished with the assistance of the experienced partner, implementation of the plan can be fully discussed and both parties benefit from such an arrangement.
- Facilitation** experienced *Eurosite* members visit partners where a management plan is requested and give advice throughout the planning procedure. This does not involve formal twinning but has most of the advantages of bilateral training for the recipient.
- Cascading** every national or major organisation could train several employees to become experts in management planning through the *Eurosite* training module. This should be organised for small international groups in *Eurosite* member organisations using the standard training methods. These people can then modify the methodology to suit local conditions and format and spread the process within their own organisations.
- Help line** *Eurosite* will be establishing a help line for Management planning advice. This will put members in touch with one another and provide a focus of expertise for use by members.

When trainers do not share the language of the country in which they are working all the documents must be provided in the local language and in one of the *Eurosite* official languages. If it is an international team it may be easiest to work in French or English.

To provide the training materials and infrastructure locally, the establishment of Training Centres in different European regions is an option. Some *Eurosite* members who have the necessary facilities may take up the training issue as a service for other *Eurosite* members. In these centres the training materials including translation of plans for local sites, should be available in French or English as well as the local languages. Courses can then be run in either the local language, French or English.

The training centre need not be very sophisticated: a minimum of overhead projector and slide projector and ideally some computers with the management planning format available, and a white board. The centre should be situated in the vicinity of the sites that will be used in the work.

A travelling training kit is available from *Eurosite* consisting of the basic training material.

5.4. When is training needed?

Training and refreshment is needed all the time as part of professional development. *Eurosite* training is available whenever there is a demand for it. Usually there is one formal training course per year.

Any member of *Eurosite* can contact *Eurosite* with a request for training. *Eurosite* may then advise that the interested people join an already scheduled course or an ad-hoc training event can be developed using any of the strategies identified in section 5.3. A formal training scheme would be programmed when there are at least ten participants. As an organisation *Eurosite* specialises in help between members - don't hesitate to seek help!

5.5. The *Eurosite* Standard Training Module

The experiences gained through the first training course for management planning using the *Eurosite* plan format in Hungary, in 1992 contributed a great deal to the development of the present training module.

A typical Management Plan Training course		
Day 1	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Background to management planning➤ The <i>Eurosite</i> management plan format➤ Example management plan for site A
Day 2	Site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Visit Site A with the local manager➤ Questions and answers session referring to site management and relating these to the management plan
Day 3	Site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Visit Site B with the local manager➤ provide background information➤ discuss management objectives and options
Day 4	Write up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Write up the operational part of the management- plan for site B i.e. from ideal objectives to work plans
Following the training course further support will be needed and this means that ongoing contact needs to be provided both proactively and reactively.		

The following is used and needed in the *Eurosite* Standard Training Module

- A series of cartoons which introduce the need for management planning, the ways plans can be used and a step by step guide to the plan format They can be easily used in any country regardless of language or understanding of the trainees as they provide all the relevant information in an easily understandable way. Only the title for each cartoon needs translation
- A site for training where a working management plan exists which can be used when studying the planning process and while carrying out review and audit training.
- A second site will be needed, again with a working plan, for an active management plan exercise. In this only the background information should be given to the trainees who then write up the operational part of the plan and compare their work with the current plan.

5.6. Review of competency

At present, there is no formal monitoring of performance following a *Eurosite* management planning training course apart from a simple assessment to measure the quality of the event. It is important that after each training event, that trainees are asked to give their opinion of the advice provided and to suggest how the module can be improved. Similarly, no assessment of the quality of the plans produced using the format is given to *Eurosite*. One simple measure is that if the plans are put into practice and used, then the training has achieved its purpose.

Plans are sent to *Eurosite* on an ad-hoc basis and we urge members to continue to do this as it provides a useful information source of plans which can be used to help others to prepare their own plans. Particularly experienced management planning practitioners are asked to give feedback to the management planning guidance through *Eurosite*. Information on the planning procedures and processes followed in their organisation and country would also be useful.

With this in mind, we have designed a simple return sheet which we would encourage members who use the format to return to *Eurosite* so that we can design the next version of the plan. The sheet requests information on how the format was used, which sections were useful and which were not. A copy can be found in Section 7 of this folder. Further copies can be obtained from *Eurosite's* Programme & Development Office in the Netherlands.

5.7 Other training

Specific training needs can also be satisfied by *Eurosite*. Such courses can deal with issues such as:

- Capacity and competency building
- Communications
- Auditing
- Ecosystem/habitat management
- Species management

Section 7: Next Steps

7. Next Steps

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7.1 How not to forget how to use your management plan!

A management plan has to be used and practised in order to have the planned effects on natural features. Therefore, it is essential to consult the plan regularly to make sure that the planned work is in line with what's written down. More importantly, consulting the ideal objectives – your vision – for site management can be very useful. Sometime it's very easy to become too involved in details and to forget the global overview for site conservation.

So, how does one make sure that this happens and that the plan does not spend its life sitting on a library shelf? This question is answered throughout the toolkit in various sections. To summarise:

- Site managers should be heavily involved in the preparation of the plan. If this happens, there is more chance that they will feel responsible for what's in it.
- A copy of the plan should be held in the site office or very close to where management is carried out.
- Carry it with you. A short summary of the plan objectives or planned work could be prepared in a portable form. A laminated plastic cover will make sure that it lasts longer. See the generic guidance, which *Eurosite* has produced in A5 format.
- Keep your work and objectives SMART (see page 3.26).

7.2 How to enhance management of your natural site

Management of a natural site does not happen in isolation from activities in its immediate surroundings and the same is true of international boundaries. Nature does not respect borders.

Somewhere in Europe there is likely to be another site manager who has experiences which may help another site manager plan or put into practice his own management. *Eurosite* encourages site managers to take advantage of this wealth of expertise and experience through helping to arrange conditions where exchange can take place. For example, this can be useful in the following situations (this list is not exhaustive):

- Reference sites - A manager may want to see how his site or part of it may have looked before detrimental changes took place. Looking to another manager's site in better condition can help to clarify his 'vision' of how the site should be managed and creates an opportunity to discuss detailed management with the other site manager on how specific areas could be restored.
- Where a site manager is experienced in a particular skill in management planning for a particular ecosystem for example, he may be able to share this with another manager through giving advice or coaching the manager so that obvious mistakes or pitfalls are avoided.

Managers can help to broaden their understanding of the site to meet these needs through becoming involved in *Eurosite's* twinning, workshop or special project programmes. For more information, see the introductory information sheet at the beginning of this Toolkit. In addition, *Eurosite* will shortly be launching a General Management Helpline for network members, which will provide a more tailor-made service.

7.3 Plan Updates

The following tables will help you keep a record of any changes you make to your management plan document.

7.3.1 Management Plan updates			
Part	Section (s)	Principal author (s)	Date
All			
1. Background			
2. Site description			
3. Evaluation & Objectives			
4. Implementation			
5. Review			

In the future, changes will be made to the *Eurosite* management planning toolkit as experience builds up and more is learnt about how the guidance works. From time to time, *Eurosite* will issue updated sections to network members through their organisational contacts. The version and date of the update can be recorded on the following sheet, and used as a reference.

7.3.2 Eurosite Toolkit: Management planning		
Section updated	Version	Date updated
All		
1. Why?		
2. How		
3. Format		
4. Audit		
5. Training		
6. Examples		
7. The next step		
8. Annexes		

7.4 Availability of the *Eurosite* Management Plan format

The *Eurosite* management plan format is available as a free download for members in various software formats from *Eurosite*'s Intranet. If you are not linked yet, get in touch with your organisation's *Eurosite* contact to find out how to access the intranet or direct with the *Eurosite* Programme & Development Office.

Paper copies are available from the *Eurosite* Secretariat in France.

Contact:

S cretariat *Eurosite*
Rue L on Fayolle
F - 62930 WIMEREUX
FRANCE

Tel: 00 33 3 21 87 29 24 Fax: 00 33 3 21 32 66 67 email: eurosite@netinfo.fr

7.5 Feedback on the *Eurosite* management planning guidance

In the *Eurosite* management planning guidance, we recommend that regular reviews are built into each management plan to check that the plan acts in the most efficient way based on the most current information. In the same spirit, *Eurosite* would welcome feedback on the *Eurosite* toolkit and the management plan format from its users, so that future reviews can take into account as wide a spectrum of views and opinions as possible. *Eurosite* would like to know how the plan format has been used and which sections were useful and which were not useful. The form is included at the end of this section.

A copy of the whole plan or the summary would also be gratefully received for *Eurosite*'s use in the development of future guidance and to give advice to other site managers. Please send it to the address below along with the completed form. Thank you.

Eurosite Programme & Development Office
Postbus 1366
NL - 5004 BJ TILBURG
Netherlands

Eurosite Management Planning Feedback form

Name	
Address	
Tel/ Fax/ email	

How the plan format has been used

Name of site:	
Country:	
Managing Organisation:	
Title of plan:	
Site area (ha):	

Does the plan have a specific theme?

- Species conservation
- Habitat conservation
- Restoration of natural features
- Other

The Toolkit

Did you find the toolkit easy to use?	Yes/ No
Were any sections unclear? (please underline)	1 Why? 4 Audit
	2 How 5 Training
	3 Format 6 Examples

Comments	
----------	--

The Management Plan format (Section 3)

Please mark on the sheet which sections were useful and which were not. Please make comments in the space provided.

	Useful	Not useful
0. The Executive Summary		
1. Background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
2. Site description		
Section	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
3. Evaluation and Objectives		
3.1 First evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
3.2 Ideal objectives for the site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
3.3 Constraints or modifiers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
3.4 Second evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
3.5 Operational objectives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
4. Implementation		
4.1 Management strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
4.2 Zoning and prescriptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
4.3 Projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
4.4 Work plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
5. Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
Glossary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		

Please continue onto a separate sheet if needed.