

Working with the Habitats Directive: two countries, two approaches

K-J. Conze & J.H. Bouwman

Introduction

Over the last few years, the implementation of the Habitats Directive has gained more and more in importance. Detailed information about dragonflies in relation to the implementation of the Habitats Directive can be found for the Netherlands in BAL & GROENENDIJK (2006), BOUWMAN & KALKMAN (2006) and in CONZE & GÖCKING (2001) for North Rhine-Westphalia. This article focuses on the differences in policy between the Netherlands and North Rhine-Westphalia and the designation of the special protection areas.

The Habitats Directive in short

In 1992, the Habitats Directive came into force. The main goal of the Habitats Directive is to maintain a 'favourable' conservation status of selected species and habitats.

The directive contains various annexes, dragonflies being mentioned in annexes II and IV. In annex II, animal and plant species are mentioned which are of 'community interest'; their conservation requires the designation of special areas of conservation, called Special Protection Areas (SPA). Until June 1995 the member states could propose a national list of

Table 1

Overview of the present or extinct species of the Habitats Directive in the Netherlands and North Rhine-Westphalia.

Species	Annex	Distribution in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW)	Distribution in the Netherlands
<i>Sympecma paedisca</i>	IV	Last record in 1960's.	Quite common in northern peat marshes.
<i>Coenagrion ornatum</i>	II	A single site in the north-east of NRW.	Never recorded.
<i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i>	II	About ten populations are present.	Last certain record in 1929 (Winterswijk).
<i>Aeshna viridis</i>	IV	Last record in 1960's	Quite common in northern and western peatlands.
<i>Gomphus flavipes</i>	IV	Reappearing and outspreading since 1998	Colonised all the larger rivers and streams since 1999.
<i>Ophiogomphus cecilia</i>	II, IV	Current status uncertain, some single observations in the last years in the South of NRW	Only present at two streams in the south.
<i>Oxygastra curtisii</i>	II, IV	Last record in 1943, river Sieg.	Last record 1982, river Dommel.
<i>Leucorrhinia pectoralis</i>	II, IV	Current status uncertain, only a few very small populations.	Larger peat marshes and locally on fens.
<i>Leucorrhinia caudalis</i>	IV	Last record in the 1940's.	Recently rediscovered (some individuals) in southern Limburg (HUSKENS, 2006).
<i>Leucorrhinia albifrons</i>	IV	In 2007 rediscovered near Paderborn.	Recently rediscovered in Friesland (DE BOER & WASSCHER, 2006)



Figure 1. Designated protected areas in the Netherlands.



Figure 2. Habitat Coenagrion mercuriale in Southern Talgraben NRW (Photo: C. Göcking).

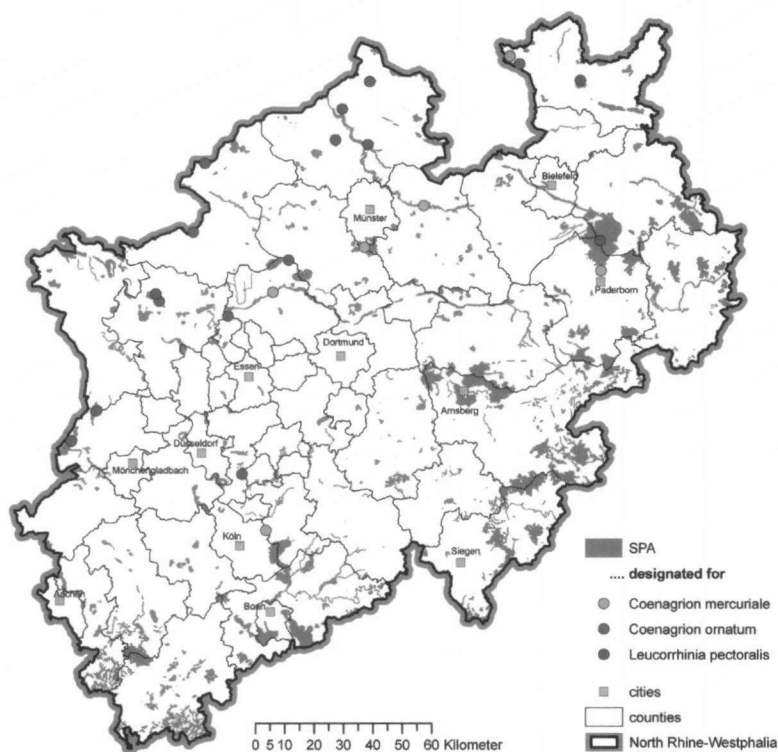


Figure 3. Designated protected areas in North Rhine-Westphalia.

sites. This list was evaluated by the European Commission and in June 1998 a draft list of sites of Community importance was presented. For several habitat types and species (varying from state to state) the proposed sites were not sufficient enough. So the states had to propose a new national list of sites. After evaluation by the European commission, each member states had to approve his list of Special Protection Areas (SPA) by June 2004.

Annex IV contains the animal and plant species of 'community interest' in need of strict protection. The species of Annex II and IV that occur in the Netherlands and / or North Rhine-Westphalia are shown in table 1. This list will probably only be expanded through proposals made by new members of the European Union. Species which are rare in one country but are quite common in another will not be selected simply because it would create too many problems in the country

where the species is common. *Coenagrion ornatum* and *Cordulegaster heros* were the last new dragonflies added to the list in 2004.

Dutch policy

During the period 1992-2000, although everything was officially in order, no one took any real action. This led to problems when companies wanted to build and everything had to stop because someone discovered that a Habitats Directive species occurred on the site. Most famous were the problems caused by the snail *Vertigo moulinsiana* and the Common Hamster (*Cricetus cricetus*). After these incidents, it became clear that action was needed; construction firms and private enterprises were getting nervous and demanded clarity from the government. From 1992 onwards, the EU ordered its members to designate protected areas. This, together with pressure from non-governmental

Table 2

Number of designated areas for the dragonflies of Annex II of the Habitat directive.

Species	NRW	Netherlands
<i>Coenagrion ornatum</i>	1	-
<i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i>	6	-
<i>Ophiogomphus cecilia</i>	-	1
<i>Leucorrhinia pectoralis</i>	15	9

organisations, finally made the government take action. Since the year 2000 the Natuurloket was opened (www.natuurloket.nl), this is an office where, after payment, governmental organisations and building companies can access all biological distribution data available. Further, protected areas have been designated (figure 1) and money and time have been invested in mapping schemes.

Mapping schemes

In 2004 and 2005, a large investment was made in the development of a biological database (internet applications, validation of data and ad-

ditional fieldwork). The main goal of the government was to get up-to-date information on the occurrence of populations of species mentioned in the Annexes of the Habitats Directive from 2000 onwards. Both professional researchers and volunteers have put in a lot of effort to get all the necessary fieldwork done. The main goal was to visit those areas where species were seen in the past but have not been seen since 2000. Besides this, a few kilometre grid squares were visited because a certain dragonfly species was expected to be present. As a consequence, we have now a much better idea of the actual distribution of the dragonfly species listed in



Figure 4. A total of 14 protected areas are designated in both countries for Leucorrhinia pectoralis (Photo: J. Bouwman).



Figure 5. Distribution map of *Leucorrhinia pectoralis* in the Netherlands and in North Rhine-Westphalia (period 1995-2003).

annex II and IV of the Habitats Directive (Bouwman & Kalkman, 2006).

Policy in North Rhine-Westphalia

In North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), the government was slow to act up till 1995, only making a small effort to fulfil the aims of the Habitats Directive. However, pushed by a 'shadow list' of non-governmental organisations, an official survey is being carried out since 1996 to build up a network of sites. The field mapping of habitats brought knowledge of the distribution of animals and plants. The field mapping for dragonflies was done by volunteers (the AK Libellen NRW). Today, there are about 500 Special Protection Area's, occupying 6 % of the country's territory (figure 7). The internet site www.natura2000.mvlv.nrw.de is a good source of information.

Species of the Habitats Directive

Cross-border distribution maps were made especially for the symposium. The distribution maps of the various species show that North Rhine-Westphalia and the Netherlands have different responsibilities for the species mentioned in the Habitats Directive. In Table 2 the number of designated areas for the species of annex II of the Habitats Directive are mentioned.

Coenagrion mercuriale and *C. ornatum*

Both species are present in North Rhine-Westphalia but do not occur in the Netherlands. The populations of *Coenagrion mercuriale* in NRW have been known for at least ten years (Göcking et al., 2008). At present, six sites have been designated as a SPA for the conservation of *C. mercuriale* (figure 2). There are still some more areas that are being investigated, which may be designated later on. *Coenagrion ornatum* is relatively recently added on the Annexe of the Habitats Directive. In NRW it is only present at one location (CLAUSEN, 2003). Here, its habitat partly overlaps that of *C. mercuriale*. Efforts are being made to protect both species in an enlarged area although the habitat (a system of ditches) is negatively influenced by neighbouring agriculture.

Leucorrhinia pectoralis (figure 5)

In the Netherlands, nine areas have been designated for *Leucorrhinia pectoralis* and in North Rhine-Westphalia, fifteen. Our knowledge on the actual population size in NRW is nevertheless quite poor and the status in most areas has to be clarified. It has only been observed every year in very few areas and reproduction is not always certain. Concerning the status, the populations



*Figure 6. De Weerribben is one of the special protection zones for *Leucorrhinia pectoralis* in The Netherlands (Photo: R. Manger).*



*Figure 7. The Roerdal is one of the special protection zones for *Ophiogomphus cecilia* in The Netherlands (Photo: R. Manger).*

in the Netherlands can be divided into two. The populations in the larger peat marshes are quite big and currently not under threat. The situation outside the large peat marshes is somewhat different and resembles the situation in NRW. It is not clear if there is a population present at all sites and whether there is successful reproduction (TERMAAT, 2006). An exception is Lonnekermeer in the province of Overijssel quite close to the German border, where a large population is present.

Ophiogomphus cecilia

In the Netherlands, only one area has been designated for *Ophiogomphus cecilia*, namely the Roerdal where it has been found since 2000. Besides this, there are another five areas designated where this species is a complementary goal. At one of these localities, the Swalm, the species was discovered in 2006 (VAN SCHAIJK, 2006). In NRW, no areas are designated because the species' status is unclear. Reports are either single individuals or exuviae. At present, not enough information is known to justify the designation of a special protection area in NRW.

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Figure 8. The Talgraben is one of the special protection zones for Coenagrion mercuriale in North Rhine- Westphalia (Photo: C. Göcking).

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Summary

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The Habitats Directive is getting more and more important in Europe. The Netherlands and North Rhine-Westphalia implement the Habitat-directive in their own way in local laws. One of the most important parts of the Habitats Directive is the designation of Special Protected Areas. They have to be designated for all species mentioned in Annex II of the Habitats Directive. Both in distribution and in designating Special Protection Areas (SPA) there's quite a difference between both countries.

Samenvatting

De Habitatrichtlijn wordt steeds belangrijker binnen het natuurbeleid in Europa. Nederland en Noordrijn-Westfalen gaan echter elk op hun eigen wijze om met de implementatie van de Habitatrichtlijn in het landelijke beleid. Een van de belangrijkste onderdelen van de Habitatrichtlijn is de aanwijzing

van zogenaamde Speciale Beschermingszones (SBZ). Deze moeten worden aangewezen voor de soorten die genoemd staan in Bijlage II van de Habitatrichtlijn. Zowel de verspreiding van deze soorten als de hoeveelheid aangewezen gebieden verschilt behoorlijk tussen beide landen.

Zusammenfassung

Die FFH-Richtlinie wird immer wichtiger für den Naturschutz in Europa. Die einzelnen Mitgliedsstaaten setzen die Richtlinie in ihren nationalen Gesetzen und praktisch graduell durchaus unterschiedlich um. Eines der wichtigsten Elemente der FFH-Richtlinie ist dabei die Ausweisung von speziellen Schutzgebieten. Auch für alle im Anhang II der Richtlinie genannten Arten sind solche Gebiete auszuweisen. Sowohl die aktuelle Verbreitung der Anhang-II-Libellenarten selbst als auch der Stand und die Qualität der Ausweisung von speziellen Schutzgebieten für sie sind in beiden Ländern unterschiedlich.

Keywords: Odonata, conservation, Habitat Directive, special protection zones, the Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia