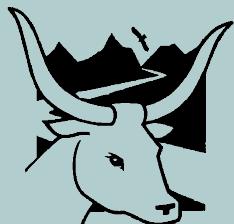


# **Natura 2000 and the 2007-13 Rural Development Plans**

**European Forum on Nature  
Conservation & Pastoralism**



# Funding for this workshop

- ◆ Scottish Natural Heritage
- ◆ Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- ◆ Western Isles Enterprise
- ◆ LEADER+
- ◆ European Commission (DG ENV)



# What are Natura 2000 sites?

- ◆ **Areas designated under:**
  - ◆ Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Special Areas for Conservation)
  - ◆ Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (Special Protection Areas)
  - ◆ Wetlands of international importance identified under the Ramsar Convention are also considered to have an equivalent status



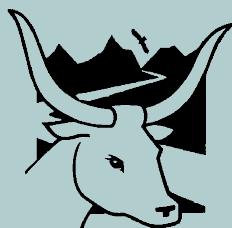
# **Aim of the Directives**

- ◆ “....to maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, ... habitats and species ... of Community interest [listed in the Annexes to the Directives]”



## **“Favourable conservation status”**

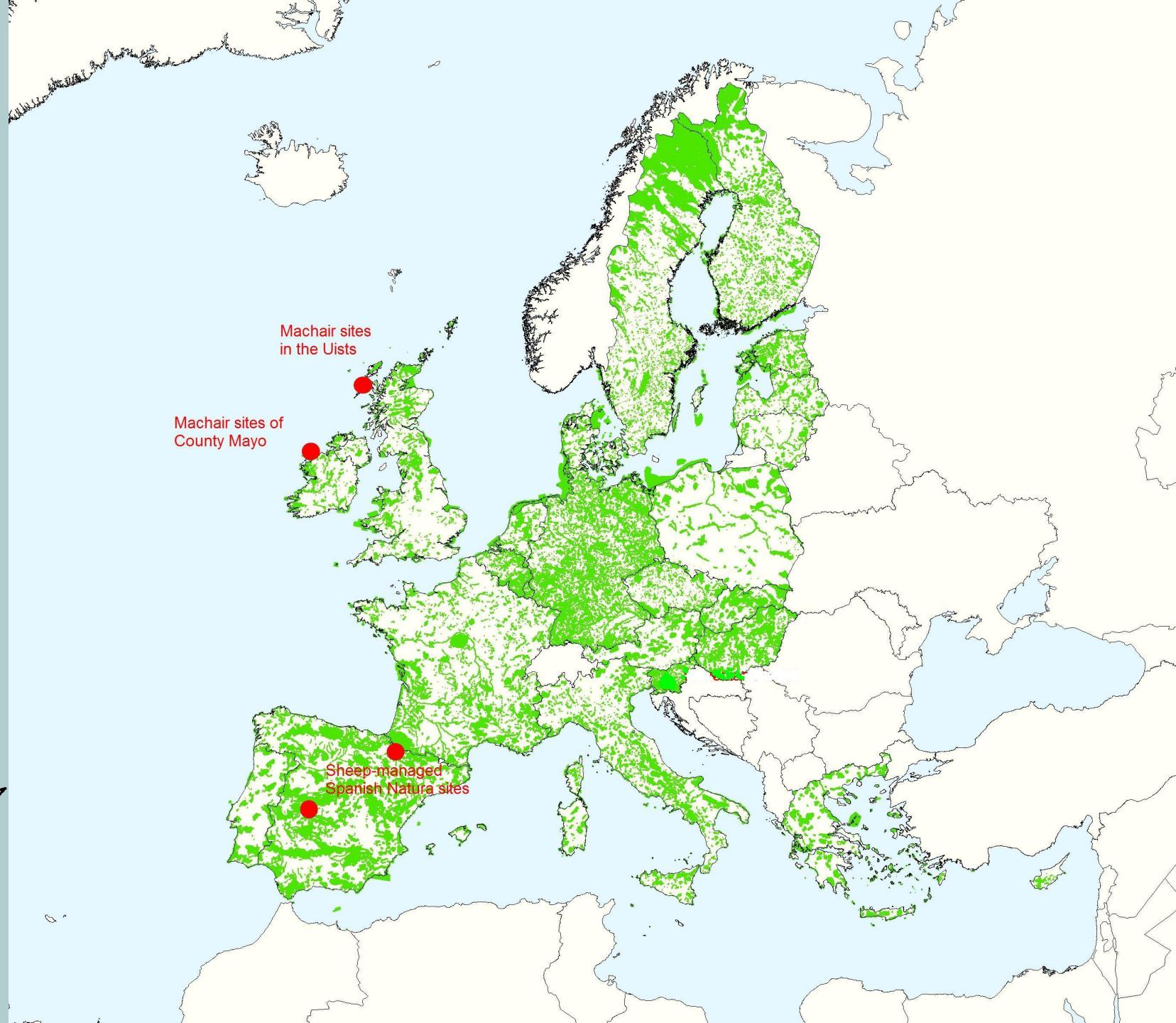
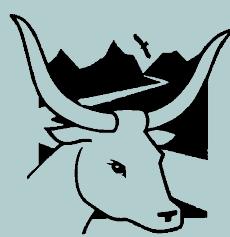
- ◆ Natural range is stable & increasing
- ◆ Population dynamics/ ecosystem structure & function needed for long-term maintenance exist and likely to continue
- ◆ For habitats, typical species also have favourable conservation status



# **Member State obligations**

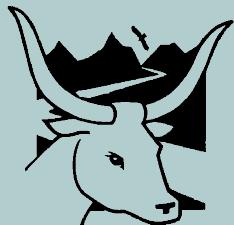
- ◆ To identify sites
- ◆ To protect them against damaging operations & harmful disturbance, including by assessment of proposals for new proposals affecting the site
- ◆ Establish necessary conservation measures, possibly including:
  - ◆ Management plans specifically for the site or integrated into other development plans
  - ◆ Appropriate legal & administrative mechanisms
- ◆ To estimate the costs involved in maintaining/restoring FCS





# **Rural Development 2007-13**

- ◆ Will be delivered by one integrating set of Regulations
- ◆ Has 3 main aims:
  - ◆ Enhancing competitiveness
  - ◆ Sustainable land use
  - ◆ Sustainable rural communities



# The policy context

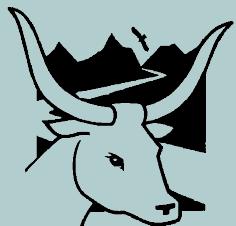
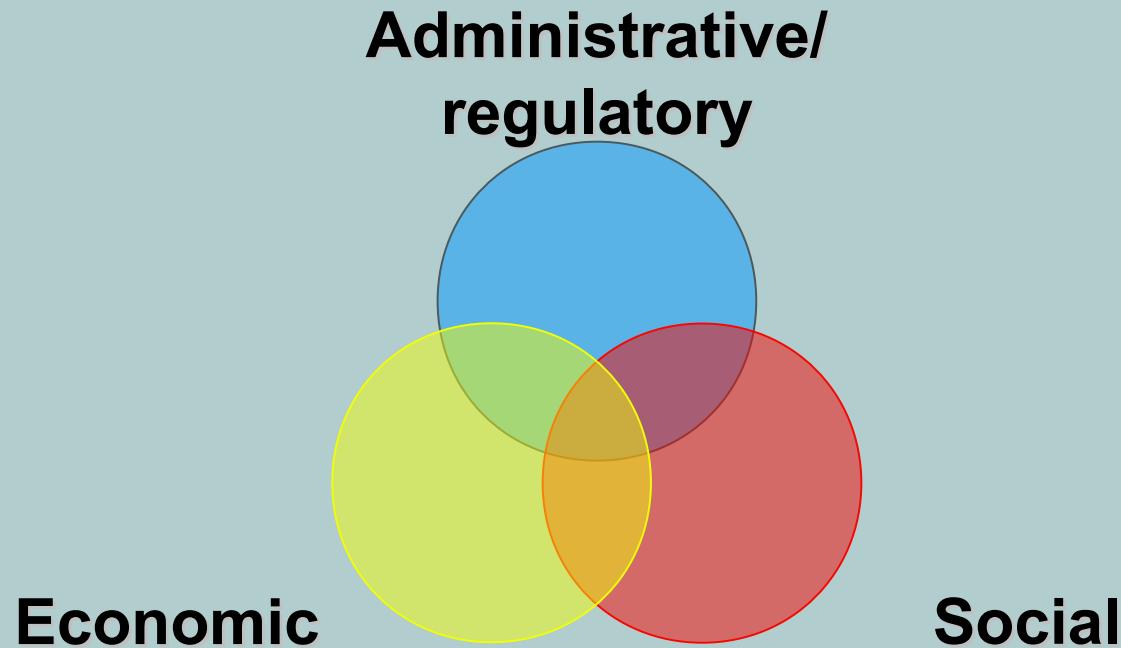
Rural Development  
Plans 2007-13

Natura 2000  
obligations

Fischler  
reforms

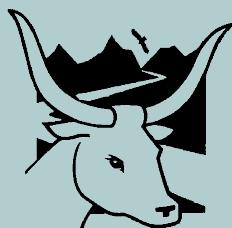


# Pressures on the farmer



## **Issues to address:**

- 1. Is there a clear picture of the conservation status of Natura sites?**
- 2. Is the link to farming practices clear?**
- 3. Is there a clear SWOT-type understanding of farming systems trends *post-Fischler*?**



## **Issues to address:**

- 4. Is this picture adequately reflected in National Strategy & RDP texts?**
- 5. Is the design of the measures proposed in RDPs appropriate to address the weaknesses of and threats to beneficial aspects of the agricultural system?**



## **Issues to address:**

6. Is the scale of the measures proposed in RDPs appropriate to address the weaknesses of and threats to beneficial aspects of the agricultural system?
7. In the case of proposed State Aids, are these adequately integrated into RDP measures?
8. Is the system for assessing all this, both locally and at EU level, adequate?

