

# **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

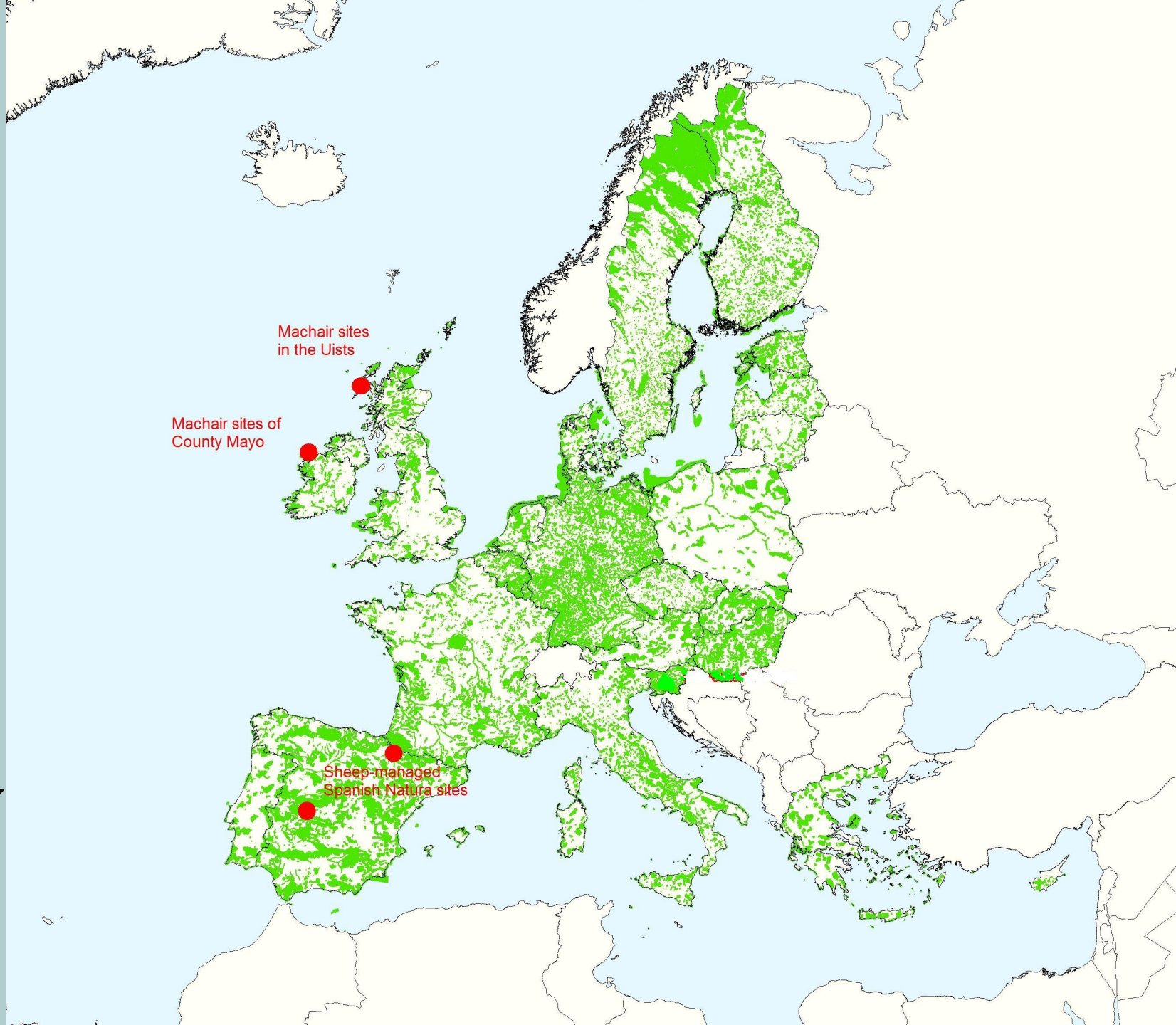
- ◆ To identify sites
- ◆ To protect them against damaging operations & harmful disturbance, including by assessment of proposals for new proposals affecting the site
- ◆ Establish necessary conservation measures, possibly including:
  - ◆ Management plans specifically for the site or integrated into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



Machair sites  
in the Uists

Machair sites of  
County Mayo

Sheep-managed  
Spanish Natura sites



# 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



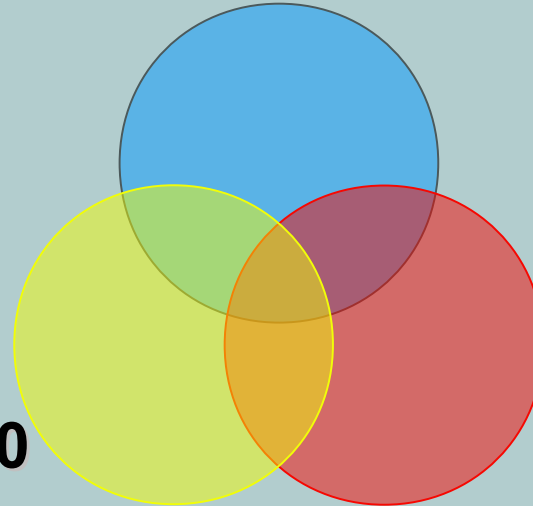


# The policy context

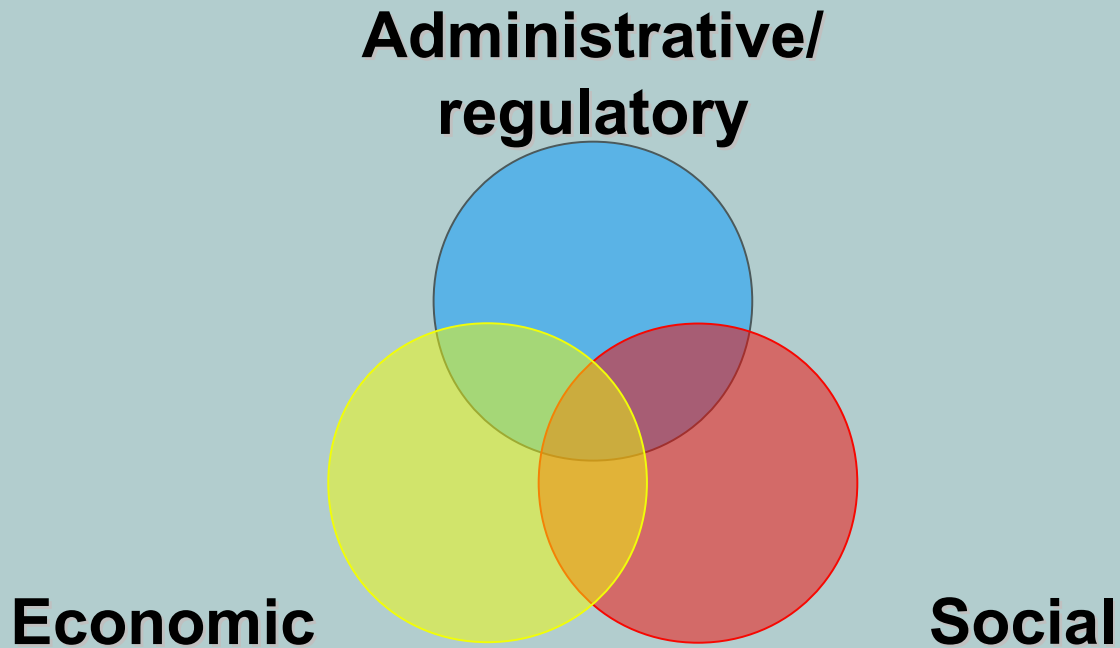
**Rural Development  
Plans 2007-13**

**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?**

