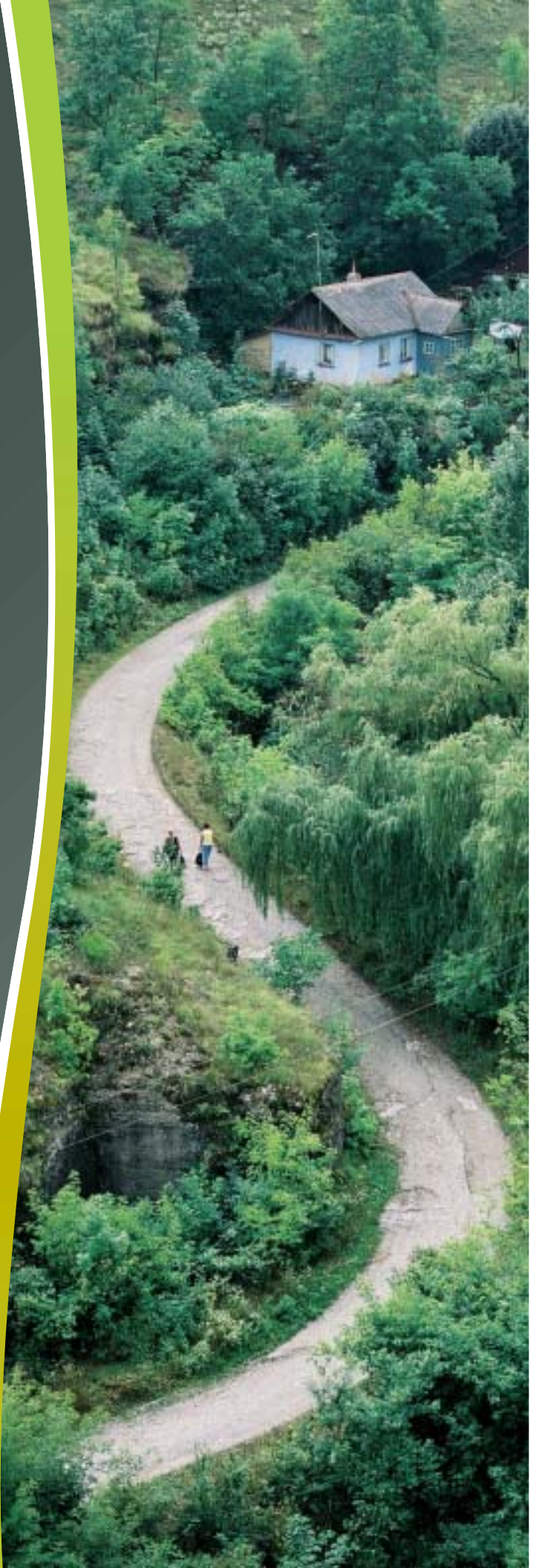


Agri-environment measures for conservation in the wider Europe

Background

The policies of the European Union have a large impact on biodiversity both within the Union's borders and beyond them. In Western Europe the intensification of agricultural practices, promoted by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in the EU, has led to widespread habitat loss and fragmentation. Although reforms are currently underway to the CAP and more funds are being allocated to rural development, further work is required to integrate biodiversity conservation into agriculture policy and practice. In Eastern Europe, as countries went through a period of dramatic political change, the use of chemical inputs and irrigation declined dramatically, however practices such as land abandonment, under-grazing and poverty of rural communities are presenting new problems. Farmers and their communities lack alternative income sources to enable them to continue farming practices which are beneficial to the maintenance of landscapes and biodiversity.



This 2-year project focuses on high-nature-value areas of Ukraine and Moldova, and assist local communities, farmers and their associations, in diversifying production methods and identifying alternative markets. This will inter alia include training on organic agriculture, agri-tourism, developing markets for local produce and focussing on organic high-quality products for the national and international markets. Seminars and public awareness measures will bring this information to the target groups.

The project is being implemented by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) in cooperation with BIOTICA Ecological Society and NECU (National Ecological Centre of Ukraine) and is funded by Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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