

## Ecological Frameworks and Biodiversity Action Plans – Making the Link

Philip James<sup>1</sup>, Mandy North<sup>2</sup> and Stephen Clarke<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>TIES, School of Environment and Life Sciences, University of Salford, Allerton Building, Frederick Road, Salford, Greater Manchester, M6 6PU

<sup>2</sup>Environmental Planning, Cheshire County Council, Backford Hall, Chester, CH1 6PZ

<sup>3</sup>Life ECONet Project, Cheshire County Council, Backford Hall, Chester, CH1 6PZ

### Abstract

In 1999 eighteen partners from three countries began work on the four-year *Life* ECONet Project. Working in three study areas (Cheshire, UK; Emilio-Romagna and Abruzzo, Italy) the partnership has been exploring the application of ecological networks and landscape ecological principles to inform land use planning. Using a case study approach the factors shaping the development of this element of the Project in the Cheshire study area are identified and described.

Development of a coarse-scale framework took priority in the first two years of the Project. This work produced draft maps, based on the existing nature conservation resource, which identified where core areas and nature restoration areas are located. Attention has now switched to issues relating to the nature restoration areas, in particular what nature restoration activities will contribute to the ecological framework.

The Biodiversity Action Plan process is one mechanism which can help to achieve the implementation of the ecological framework. The potential linkages between the ecological framework for Cheshire and the Biodiversity Action Plan process are discussed.