



**Closer  
to Nature**

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Kozmice Bird Meadows – A Unique Example of How to Reconcile Responsible Farming and Nature Conservation**

Kozmice, 20 August 2015: The Czech Union for Nature Conservation (ČSOP) has presented to the public a new observation platform, which stands seven metres tall, within the unique landscape of the Kozmice Bird Meadows. This attractive hiking destination lies between Ostrava and Opava, and is already the eleventh site in Moravia-Silesia that has been unlocked for casual visitors thanks to the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme.

"The Kozmice Bird Meadows are certainly remarkable. They are a textbook example of how it is possible, even today, to engage in farming and still to preserve important natural values. Creating awareness and explaining this issue is one of the fundamental goals of this project," says ČSOP president Libor Ambrozek, adding: "The newly built observation platform allows nature lovers to explore the world of birds and other animals from within touching distance."

Among the birds that will reveal themselves to the patient observer are protected species, such as the Great Egret, the Sea Eagle, the Black Stork, and the Eurasian Penduline Tit, but also a great variety of more common bird species. They, too, are presented to visitors, along with other facts of interest about this spot in nature, by seven new info panels, and of course by the bird-watching platform itself.

"Our support for nature conservation projects is a systematic, long-term affair. This place – which is already the seventy-first nature location that we have made accessible in collaboration with the ČSOP – perfectly matches the mission statement of our NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme: it opens the eyes of visitors to the natural treasure trove of our country through a mixture of education and entertainment," says Radek Benčík, COO of NET4GAS, the company that has since 2007 been the general partner of the ČSOP.

The Kozmice Bird Meadows represent a stretch of quite contiguous alluvial meadow in the Opava River basin. The past practice of 'amelioration' and straightening of watercourses, which involved the filling and systematic draining of wetlands (in the 1960s to 1980s), did not spare the Opava. The site's condition quickly began to deteriorate, as a large portion of the meadows was ploughed under to make room for maize fields, while stands of spruce and pine saplings were planted in other parts. This greatly decimated plant habitats, which in turn led to a decline in the local populations of rare butterflies and birds. In spite of all this adversity, the meadows did, at least in part, retain their great biological value. During the years 2013-2014, and with the support of the Operational Programme Environment, pools were being restored, and the wetlands underwent a general revitalization effort.

"Our club definitely isn't approaching this as a one-off activity. We intend to organize additional events for the general public that will take place in the Kozmice Meadows, such as guided walks for children and the youth, or – in collaboration with expert ornithologists – an event called Birdlife

Days. We also want to engage the public by inviting them to publish their own bird-watching successes through a form on our website," adds Kamil Lisal, head of the local 'Ochránce' chapter of the ČSOP and local farmer.

The seven-metre tall bird-watching platform stands to the southwest of Kozmice; the road and the railway line between Ostrava and Opava run past it. Visitors may reach the site following the green hiking trail from the train station in Jilešovice, or Cycling Tracks Nos. 6096 and 6128. GPS: 49.9033222N, 18.1360383E.

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The **Czech Union for Nature Conservation** is a group of people who love nature and share an active interest in nature conservation. It currently has close to 7,000 members, some of whom hail from the ranks of professional naturalists, but others are enthusiastic volunteers, while some are adults and others are children. Everyone can help. Do you love nature? Then join us! For more information, visit [www.csop.cz](http://www.csop.cz).

**NET4GAS** is the Czech Republic's reliable and safe gas transmission system operator, pursuing the responsible policy of protecting nature and the environment for current and future generations. The commercial operations of NET4GAS are very closely connected with the issue of nature conservation, and it is this fact that underlies the firm's long-term strategy of corporate philanthropy that has been implemented within the context of the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme. Since 2007, NET4GAS has been the general partner of the Czech Union of Nature Conservation, while the firm also supports various other projects for which the slogan "Closer to Nature" is at the heart of sustainable development. For detailed information on the sites that have been opened to the general public, and for lots of additional interesting information related to nature, please visit [www.blizprirode.cz](http://www.blizprirode.cz).



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Overview of the 71 sites opened to the public by Czech Union for Nature Conservation under the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme**

#### **2007**

NT Klíč Valley, Svor / Česká Lípa  
NT Hloučela Biocorridor, Prostějov  
Opičák, Liberec  
Jelenice, Pozořice / Brno-venkov  
Myslík Quarry, Myslík / Frýdek-Místek  
NT Milovice Observation Post, Milovice / Nymburk

#### **2008**

NT Footpaths in the Beskid Foothills, Kunčice pod Ondřejníkem / Frýdek-Místek  
NT A Forest Full of Senses, Krásná Lípa / Děčín  
NT Bludov Hillside, Bludov / Šumperk  
NT Vinoř Park – Satalice Pheasantry, Praha-Vinoř  
Golden Hill, Bečov nad Teplou / Karlovy Vary  
Kamenec, Kamenec u Radnic / Rokycany  
NT Zvole Hummock, Zvole u Prahy  
NT Fryšták, Fryšták / Zlín  
Salamander Spring, Myslík / Frýdek-Místek  
NT Velký Košíř, Litomyšl / Svitavy  
NT Mnichov Serpentinite, Prameny / Cheb  
NT Hasina Valley, Lipno / Louny  
Chlum Quarry, Srbsko / Beroun  
Mokroš Biocentre, Mořice / Prostějov  
NT Zahrady, Český Brod / Kolín  
Blahutovice Observation Post, Blahutovice / Nový Jičín  
NT Votočnice, Sázava / Benešov

#### **2009**

Rezavka, Ostrava  
Štěpán Nature Reserve, Děhylov / Ostrava  
NT Medník, Hradištko / Praha-západ  
Vladař Mountain, Vladořice / Karlovy Vary  
NT Podkovák, Lesná / Tachov  
Kudlačena, Horní Bečva / Vsetín  
Podlešák's Elm, Vimperk-Boubská / Prachatice  
Above the River, Bečov nad Teplou / Karlovy Vary

#### **2010**

Choryn Wetland Nature Reserve, Lešná / Valašské Meziříčí  
NT Water World, Lesná / Domažlice  
Poustka, Pozořice / Brno-venkov

Skalka Nature Reserve, Kunčice pod Ondřejníkem / Frýdek-Místek  
NT Sudslavice Circuit, Vimperk / Prachatice  
Žák's Hill National Nature Reserve, Cikháj / Žďár nad Sázavou  
Moses Spring - Emperor's Stone, Vesec / Liberec  
Semanín Trail, Semanín / Ústí nad Orlicí

### **2011**

NT Na cvičišti - At the Training Ground, Valašské Meziříčí / Vsetín  
Střelenská Meadow, Střelná / Teplice  
Capartice Meadows, Capartice / Domažlice  
Chlum Mountain Nature Reserve, Chlum / Karlovy Vary  
Manor Rock Natural Monument, Habrovany / Vyškov  
NT Around Vřesina, Vřesina / Opava  
NT Saint Vitus Guild, Trstěnice / Cheb

### **2012**

Litovice Pond Bird-Watching Spot, Litovice / Praha-západ  
Kolo Wetland, Slavkov / Uherské Hradiště  
NT Vidžín - Telecí potok, Vidžín / Plzeň-sever  
NT Housle, Praha-Lysolaje  
Pančava, Pozořice / Slavkov  
NT Mýto, Nedvězí / Prague  
Bohumilice Avenue, Bohumilice / Prachatice  
Ořešník, Hejnice / Liberec  
NT Heřmanice Pond, Heřmanice / Ostrava

### **2013**

Lačnov Crocuses, Lačnov / Vsetín  
NT Umíř, Plachtín / Plzeň-sever  
NT Pňov Mead, Pňov-Předhradí / Kolín  
NT St. John's Rapids, Štěchovice / Praha-západ  
Třemešské rybníky Bird-Watching Spot, Dolní Studénky / Šumperk  
Path to Sulphurous Springs, Zádveřice / Zlín

### **2014**

NT Libušín Fortification, Libušín / Kladno  
Lušová Valley, Lušová / Vsetín  
NT Zásmuky Pheasantry, Zásmuky / Kolín  
Canopy Road Beneath Hořínkova Forester's Lodge, Buchlovice / Uherské Hradiště  
NT Chlum, Nepřevázka, Mladá Boleslav  
NT Through landscape of floods, Jeseník nad Odrou / Nový Jičín  
NT Hády Quarries and Surroundings, Brno

### **2015**

NT Vesec Valley, Liberec  
NT Choryně Sentinel, Vsetín  
Kozmice Bird Meadows, Kozmice / Opava

NT = nature trail

**Find more information at [www.blizprirode.cz](http://www.blizprirode.cz)**

