

Resilience is a key-notion in our understanding of ecosystem management. It is about ecosystem functioning, appropriate management to ensure the sustained delivery of ecosystem services, ecosystem restoration, and so on. It is rewarding to note that the concept of resilience also applies to CEM and its chair: when I was not able to make my presentations to the conference in Tallinn, Estonia (entitled Nature Conservation beyond 2010), my tasks were taken over by members Kim Janssen and René Henkens, who presented respectively on “Rapid Ecological Appraisal for Peace-support Operations” and the case of “Hustai National Park in Mongolia”. I understood from the Director General of IUCN, Julia Marton-Lefèvre, that they did so very well and I am very grateful for their availability at this very last moment to replace me.

*CEM matters:*

I am pleased to welcome Kelvin Passfield, an Australian residing in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, as our acting Steering Committee member for Oceania and South-East Asia (position to be confirmed by IUCN Council). Kelvin is a specialist in marine and coastal ecosystems and has spent most of his professional life in the rich archipelagos of Oceania and South East Asia.

It was CEM’s turn to present itself to IUCN’s council. Our Deputy, Angela Andrade, came over from Colombia for the occasion. The Power Point presentation we made will be available on our website. We are indebted to the staff of the Ecosystem Management Programme for their input.

Radhika Murti has made a useful PP presentation on CEM that may be used by any of our members. In case you are asked to represent our Commission, you are invited to download this presentation from our web page.

*From the Thematic Groups*

The contribution of the Fisheries Expert Group to the SBSTTA-meeting in Nairobi (a technical body in support of the policy makers of the CBD) was very much appreciated by the participants. As a result, the FEG was invited to organise a side-event for the next Conference of Parties of the CBD in Nagoya, Japan.

In Gland, Angela and I met with Jon Paul Rodriguez, our Thematic Group Leader for the Ecosystems Red List. Jon Paul is also the Deputy Chair of the Species Survival Commission, and we benefit a lot from the experience of SSC in developing the Red-List. Good progress is being made with it, and Jon Paul expects to be able to present a fully tested approach to the next World Conservation Congress, to be adopted for world-wide application.

*From the Regions*

IUCN’s DG has published a note concerning the Oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The management of the impacts of this spill is basically an application of the ecosystem approach. I contacted Steve Edwards, our RVC for North America, to discuss if our Commission does not have a role to play in this, as we did at the time of the Tsunami. Our Tsunami workshop in Sri Lanka had much impact, and laid the foundations for our leading work on disaster management, under the guidance of Karen Sudmeier. However, the oil spill issue will demand an effort that goes well beyond the capacities of CEM alone, and we will have to conclude some important partnerships if we want to deliver meaningful contributions to the long-term solutions of this kind of problem.

In Southern and Eastern Africa, interesting developments are taking place for CEM. CEM-member Dieter van den Broeck organised a successful training workshop on ecosystem management in South Africa. Hillary Masundire, our RVC for the region, has launched an initiative to bring the CEM members from that region together so that they may exchange their experiences in ecosystem management. This initiative has raised a lot of enthusiasm, proving my point that ecosystem management and the conservation of ecosystem functioning is done in the first place in the regions. At the end of the day, it is in the field where we should make a difference.

*Other matters*

Sometimes our work in ecosystems may lead to very unexpected results. The RVC from India, Dhruvayoti Ghosh, sent me an article published in one of the leading Indian newspapers where he was interviewed on his activities to promote better hygienic situations for and with rural women. I felt very proud to be associated with such a man, and I am grateful to Dhruva that he shared this with me.