



Flash Report – August/September 2009

Piet Wit, Chair of CEM IUCN

Activities of the Steering Committee during the months of August and September were very much oriented towards the Steering Committee meeting in Mongolia and the associated workshop on steppe ecosystems.

CEM matters:

- We have a new logo. Arjen Oosterkamp, a young designer from The Netherlands, provided his talents free of charge to develop it. The squares and colours represent the different elements of an ecosystem. The triangle represents the functional unit of an ecosystem. The letters “CEM” represent management.
- Pat Hawes is back from a well-deserved holiday after all the organizational stress of the meeting in Mongolia. The minutes of the Steering Committee meeting will be published on our web-page shortly.
- We discussed the activity plans submitted by the Regional Vice Chairs and Thematic Group Leaders. The plans were ambitious; they showed vision, motivation and leadership. Not all RVCs and TGLs have submitted their work plans yet, and I call upon those that did not, to do so before the end of this month.
- There are two important products that I like all CEM-members and groups to contribute to. These are the Red-List of ecosystems, and the Ecosystem Services Themes. The workshop in Mongolia on steppe ecosystems, provides us with a good example: Virgin steppes are under threat, while many - often nomadic people still depend on the products and services like grazing and watering the livestock.
- We would also like to see each RVC and each TGL develop an active programme to involve young professionals with our work. In particular, we will stimulate each leader to help him or her find a young expert as his alter ego to work on further development and implementation of CEM’s programme together.

From the Thematic Groups

- Masse Lo from Senegal is the SC’s focal point for drylands. It turned out to be difficult to find someone who had sufficient time to lead the Thematic Group on this important topic. I am pleased to announce that Mrs. Lene Poulsen has accepted to be the Thematic Group Lead. Mrs. Poulsen has a strong background in dryland management, especially in West Africa, where a/o she worked with village communities.
- At the workshop in Mongolia on steppe ecosystems it was decided to establish a Thematic Group on Holarctic Steppes. Mrs. Tatyana Bragina has agreed to lead this group. Mrs. Bragina is from Kazakhstan where she holds a Professorship in Biology at the Kostanay State Pedagogical Institute.
- I asked in the last flash report for suggestions from CEM/members for agenda items to be discussed at the SC-meeting. Unfortunately, one member thought it wiser to diffuse his discontent about the selection of Thematic Group Leaders to a larger audience. I believe that we now have an excellent team of RVCs and TGLs that are prepared to put much of their precious professional time in furthering the cause of ecosystem management.

From the Regions

- Joost Brouwer represented CEM on a workshop on Biodiversity Conservation, Ecosystem Services and Poverty Reduction, on the island of Vilm, Germany.
- I was asked by the CIMIC Centre of Excellence in Enschede, The Netherlands, to write an instruction booklet on the ecosystem approach and reconstruction work in conflict areas. The booklet should orient peace support operations to achieve stability based on the principles of sustainable development.

General IUCN matters

- I attended a workshop in Cambridge organised by SSC and CEESP on sustainable use. The existing Sustainable Use Group (SUG) will be upgraded to an inter-commissional body. Sustainable use is one of the three pillars of the CBD! CEM-members will be invited to participate in the new SUG.
- I was also invited to join a team of IUCN-experts that visited a Rio Tinto plant in Dunkerque, France. This is part of the procedure under the new guidelines for dealing with the private sector, to be followed when new agreements for collaboration are being negotiated.