

Flash report November 2010

In the last flash report I already thanked our representatives at Nagoya for the quality of their work at COP-10 of the CBD. At the IUCN council meeting I received many compliments for their presentations. Simon Stuart, Chair of SSC, stated that CEM has put itself clearly on the map, and the Director General used part of John Liu's documentary to illustrate IUCN's influence at COP-10. Again: Thank you, colleagues and friends!

CEM matters

It is not always easy-going in ecosystem management, and the same goes for our commission. We may have good ideas, expertise and volunteer time, money even, and still some of our plans are difficult to get off the ground. It should not discourage us. Our planet needs us. The mining workshop for West Africa had to be given up because of insecurity in the region. Our initiative to start READI (*"the Rapid Ecological Answers to Disasters Initiative"*), a cross-IUCN facility to guide politicians, relief agencies and others on disaster response in the early stages of such an event, met with much approbation in IUCN's council, but when it came to commitment for fund-raising, Councilors' faces turned blank. Karen Sudmeier commented to me: "Piet, if *we* don't do this, who else will?" Thank you Karen for those words that I liked to share with all of our members for inspiration.

From the Thematic Groups

David Lamb, our special advisor on Ecosystem Restoration, is organizing a side event at the 2011 conference of SERi (Society for Ecological Restoration international). The theme of the side event will be on ecosystem resilience and restoration.

Jon Paul Rodrigues, TGL for the Red List, was contacted by IUCN-councilor Ma Keping to organise a workshop on red-listing Chinese ecosystems .

I was asked to represent IUCN at a brain-storming session organised by Shell on the implication of the Mexican Gulf Oil Spill for future oil exploitations. TNC and Wetlands International participated as well. Where these organisations made very sensible remarks on the importance of sound environmental policies for the private sector, I emphasized the need to implement such policies in the field and the role NGOs like IUCN and its commissions can play in that.

From the Regions

IUCN-councillor and CEM-member Hans de Iongh invited me to give a presentation at a conference in Maroua (Cameroon), on the importance of ecosystem services from Protected Areas. I received input from the Thematic Group Leadership on Ecosystem Services (Jelena Ilić and Dolf de Groot) which greatly improved the content. The conference was followed by a workshop on large carnivores in West-Africa that I also attended. It is obvious that one can only conserve these wide-ranging top-predators if we take the ecosystem dimension fully into consideration. Two statements were prepared on the conservation of Waza and Benoue National Parks.

Kelvin Passfield, our SC member for Oceania, will represent us at the Conference on "Sharing Power: that CEESP will organise mid-January in New Zealand.

Other IUCN matters

With the departure of Neville Ash for UNEP, we are temporarily confronted with a support-gap from the secretariat. For the time being, Stewart McGinnis will be my counterpart at HQ for commission matters. Stewart needs little introduction within IUCN. He is very ably leading the Forest Landscape Programme which is one of the more influential programmes on Ecosystem Management of IUCN. Ed Barrow, another renowned and high ranking staff member of IUCN will temporarily take over the Ecosystem Management Programme. Ed is based at the Nairobi office and will come over regularly to Gland as long as this assignment requires it. I am pleased

with the commitment of the Director General to the Ecosystem Management Programme as demonstrated by the assignment of Stewart and Ed, and they are most welcome to work with us.

Of more concern are the plans to delocalize EMP outside Gland. This gives me headaches, but the DG has assured me that delocalization is just one of the options for the future integration of EMP in the secretariat. The final decision will only be taken in consultation with me.



Presently my wife and I are in South-Eastern Guinea Bissau where we have started an initiative on the protection of Chimpanzees and the conservation of their habitat. Most of our work is community based.

Email connections are not possible in most parts of this small and lovely country, so that this flash report may arrive late in your email box.

Nevertheless, from the forests and savannas of the Boé:

A merry Christmas and a happy new year

Bissau 20th of December 2010