



Flash Report – December 2010 and January 2011
Piet Wit, Chair of CEM/IUCN

In the first place let me thank all of you that sent me your best wishes for 2011. Let us hope that 2011 will be a less chilly year for conservation than 2010 was.

CEM matters

The next Steering Committee meeting will take place in Fiji, where we are invited by the Regional Director of IUCN's office, Mr. Taholo Kami. Our RVC for Oceania, Mrs. Milika Sobey, consulted with CEM's partners in Fiji about the side-event that we will organise for the occasion. Where we would have expected a topic on coastal zone management or the marine environment in general in island states, it turned out that Fiji actually has major challenges in river management, so there will be a CEM-workshop on integrated river management in the Fiji islands. For me, this choice is proof of how little we often know about our members in other parts of the world, and therefore how important it is that our Steering Committee meets at those places. During the week leading up to our SC-meeting and workshop, Radhika Murti has kindly offered to organise a training on communicating ecosystems and climate change for media professionals, which we gratefully accepted of course.

By this time you must all have received the mid-term enquiry about your appreciation of CEM, its programme of work and its organisation. Quite a few members have filled in the forms already, but not all. Please do so in the next weeks so that we can discuss the results at the coming Steering Committee meeting. If you have any questions, please contact my assistant Dominique Noome (dominiquenoome@gmail.com).

The first nominations for the Luc Hoffmann award are coming in. I look forward to having a good first discussion at the next SC meeting about the candidate(s) that may receive a reward in Jeju (Korea).

From the Thematic Groups

Graham Bennett has decided to withdraw as the Thematic Group Leader for the connectivity theme. Graham would have liked to create a CEM open access data base on ecosystem connectivity, but the necessary IT-facilities promised by IUCN-HQ take more time to be developed than originally thought. Together with Graham we are looking for a replacement as connectivity remains an important issue in ecosystem management.

Our Fisheries Expert Group (FEG) have issued a report entitled "Selective Fishing and Balanced Harvest in Relation to Fisheries and Ecosystem Sustainability" see: <http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2011-001.pdf>

From the Regions

Bernal Herrera, our RVC of Meso-America, sent us a summary report with the results of 3 CEM-workshops at the XIVth Congress of the Meso-American Society for Biology and Conservation. The workshop on sustainable forestry arrived a/o at the conclusion that "*good forest management competes with illegality and is developed in a hostile environment*". While I know that this is true and that it applies for many other ecosystems as well, it is still shocking. Any institutional and socio-economic environment should be hostile to illegality, not the other way round. That is what good governance is about, it is the management part of our commission, and we have to work on that.

Olivier Hamerlynck, our TGL on the Ecosystem Approach, is very active in the conservation of Tana River and Rufiji River ecosystems in Eastern Africa. In spite of all the technical and environmental evidence accumulated about these rivers, the ecosystem services they provide and the value of all that, every now and then ideas to construct large hydrological infrastructure on these rivers gain momentum. Ideas in which biological values, ecosystem services and people's interests in these are simply forgotten. Olivier has good, scientifically sound arguments to bring the policy makers to a more balanced decision on river development in which nature and people have their rightful place.

A warm welcome to Dr Brahim Haddane (IUCN Regional Councillor & Director, Jardins Exotiques de Bouknadel, Morocco) who has accepted to be our Regional Vice Chair for North African and to Jabier Ruiz-Mirazo who is our new Regional Vice Chair for Western Europe. Jabier has a Ph.D. with the University of Granada (Spain) in Mediterranean ecology. At the moment he is employed as a scientific researcher by the Spanish Research Council.