



The Ecosystem News is CEM's quarterly newsletter

June 2011

[Contact us](#)

CEM activities



IUCN and CEM at the 3rd Session of UN ISDR Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, 8-13 May, Geneva

The Third Session of the Global Platform brought together over 2,500 policy makers and practitioners, from government, international organizations, NGOs, academia, the private sector and disaster risk reduction, recovery and reconstruction experts from both developing and developed countries. IUCN and CEM organized a number of high-level events and roundtables, together with the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR), a global alliance of UN agencies, NGOs and specialist institutes, of which IUCN is an active member. Sessions included: Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender Sensitive, Managing Watersheds for Urban Resilience, PEDRR Awareness-raising and Learning Event on Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction, Roundtable on Mountains, World Reconstruction Conference Environmentally Sustainable Recovery and a Keynote speech by IUCN's Director General at the Global Assessment Report (GAR) briefing. Outcomes included reference to the importance of ecosystems for disaster risk reduction in the Chair's Summary of the Third Session Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, an article in France's largest daily newspaper *Le Monde* (May 11, 2011) and potential new collaborations for strengthening IUCN's work in this field. [contact](#)



CEM Welcomes New Mediterranean-Type Ecosystem Thematic Group (MTEG)

Mediterranean-type ecosystems (MTEs), with their characteristic and unique climatic regimes of mild wet winters and warm and dry summers, occur in just five regions of the world: the Mediterranean Basin, the Cape Region of South Africa, Southwestern and South Australia, California, and central Chile. The world's five Mediterranean-climate regions are home to remarkable levels of plant diversity and endemism that has led all five regions to be designated as "biodiversity hotspots." MTEG will tap into our members' collective experience in managing field station reserves and protected areas in Mediterranean-climate regions, to accomplish three major goals: Promote cross-disciplinary scientific research, best practices, and information-sharing, for the effective ecosystem management of MTEs; Enhance education and training for future conservation professionals; Provide environmental public outreach programs relevant to Mediterranean-climate regions. MTEG welcomes all who have interest, expertise, and experience in managing the exceptional biodiversity and unique ecosystems of MTEs. [contact](#)



Greetings from Guy Williams, CEM's new Regional Vice Chair - Oceania

I work in the area of community led sustainable land management and ecosystem services, and play a role in both the assessment and evaluation of natural capital in emerging markets in this area. I am also involved in the development of international standards and networks aimed at supporting environmental management and ecosystem conservation. My work sees me bringing together a team of practitioners in areas such as community consultation, spatial, land use, natural resource management and environmental economics. I work at Sinclair Knight Merz, a global consulting and engineering firm, to develop integrated conservation and community development projects. I have worked and undertaken research in Australia, India, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Indonesia, Rwanda, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo and Malaysia. I am currently based in Melbourne Australia, but work and travel throughout Oceania region. It is a pleasure to take on this regional role and I look forward to working with the team to develop the IUCN CEM profile in Oceania. [contact](#)



CEM at the Sibthorp Trust seminar 14-15 April 2011, Cirencester UK

CEM participated in a seminar tracing 15 years of Ecosystem Approach (EA) from “done by scientists in protected areas” to wider uptake through the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. Implementation has been constrained by operational issues such as which tools, at what scale, under what circumstances and why? What is its added value? Presentations ranged from global overviews to basin-scale, soap box cries from practitioners, deep economics and intense brainstorming. Outputs of the workshop will be packaged for target audiences such as practitioners and policy makers. The CEM presentation was based on a survey of the 75 EA members and suggested the need to move into the wider development landscape, influencing sectoral powerhouses, building capacity in local government, tailoring issue-oriented responses for decision-makers, institution-building and establishing links with governance (empowering weak stakeholders) together with caution on the excessive dollarization of ecosystem services. [Link](#)

Members' initiatives



The Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBiM), Haiti's only IUCN member, has begun a detailed survey of the condition of mangrove ecosystems in Haiti. Extreme pressure on these systems, primarily for fuel, has caused major degradation of these important coastal ecosystems. FoProBiM hopes to have this survey completed by mid-2012 and has already gathered preliminary data along approximately 50% of the country and will be using Google Earth combined with ground-truthing to complete this activity. The results of this activity will, it is hoped, bring to light the importance of protecting these valuable resources and the role they play in the overall well-being of the nation as a whole and for coastal communities in particular. [contact](#)



Sustainable materials – top priority for Kinnarps customers

Since the beginning of September 2010, the Swedish interior solutions supplier Kinnarps (who supplied the complete solution and furnishings to the new IUCN headquarters in Gland), have been running a project with the purpose of improving on the company's sustainability efforts. As one part of this project a customer survey was sent out to 11 000 customers on four different markets in Europe. What was evident from this survey was that sustainable materials were top priority. This was followed by use of non-toxic chemicals in second place and reduced climate impact on the third. Kinnarps have been working with sustainable sourcing of wood for a long time and Kinnarps Head of Quality and Environment is currently the chairman of the Swedish FSC board and is very delighted over the results. “This is really good news. The climate issue has got a lot of attention in the recent years, and it should, but the preservation of nature and habitats is an equally important issue that needs to be addressed. To receive a survey that shows that our customers believe the same is very encouraging and shows that the general awareness concerning bio-diversity is spreading”. [contact](#)



Reflections from the PRESENCE learning Network

The third PRESENCE workshop was recently held at the Baviaanskloof World Heritage Interpretative Centre, South Africa. The workshop focused on the achievements and future direction of the restoration across the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve and the role of the PRESENCE network within this process of restoration. The participants were enthusiastic and played an active role during the workshop. This made the PRESENCE workshop 2011 a success. The presence of different professions made this workshop informative. For some participants all the information led to a shift in thinking. Based on the acquired information the workshop participants discussed relevant topics during the open space and finally created action plans. Now it is up to the participants to continue and bring these action plans to life. The input and

sharing the commission's experience of different CEM members, Dolf de Groot, Matt Zylstra and John Di Lui, was of great value. [contact](#)



I am counting moon, I am counting fish- traditional environmental knowledge and social vulnerability of artisan fishing community of Tarrafal, Sao Nicolau, Cape Verde

For the traditional community of Tarrafal substance fishing is a way of living. Their knowledge of the sea, traditional fishing techniques, counting moon phases for choosing adequate fishing grounds are passed from father to son. Nowadays, they face fish stock depletion, late arrival of key species, lack of fish baits, unexpected sea storms and unjust over-competition with industrial foreign fishery, very often illegal one. In a series of workshops and interviews, part of their traditional knowledge was revealed in order to identify new adaptation strategies. [Contact](#)



Proposal for a Marine Ecological Corridor from Spain to France

On May 31, 2011 in Bayonne, France, [Oceana](#), and the Official College of Biologists of the Basque Country (COBE) hosted a media conference to launch their proposal for a marine ecological corridor. This corridor would extend from San Sebastián in Spain to Hendaye in France and encompass some 27,000 ha over 35 km of coastline. This proposal was in part prompted by intensive research by Oceana's team aboard the Ocean Ranger where they uncovered many unique ecological communities and geological formations. Spain currently only has 1.3% of its marine area protected, considerably less than the 10% recommended by UN Convention on Biodiversity. The ecological corridor would complement a similar proposal on the French side of the Basque country from Biarritz to Hendaye under the Natura 2000 network. This part of the coast is rich in diversity but sorely underrepresented from a conservation perspective. It is also the source of a long and culturally rich fishing heritage as well as a strong coastal recreation tourism industry. Further research is anticipated to identify critical habitat areas as well as ongoing discussions with key government ministries. [contact](#)

Climate change and vulnerability assessment toolkit

An on-line toolkit for assessment of vulnerability to climate change was successfully tested in two sample sites in the United States. Since the toolkit is web based, any national or foreign local entity forming a focus group to investigate vulnerability issues related to natural hazards can apply for login privileges. The login account establishes a secure and private collaborative GIS environment that a focus group can customize to its specific location. The Vulnerability Assessment Support System (VASS, vass.smrc-research.com) is designed for ease-of-use to provide an effective way for non-expert users and small communities to assess their vulnerability to climate change and to prioritize their response strategy according to known past hazards and availability of critical facilities. The VASS toolkit is developed and maintained by SMRC under a grant from the NOAA CPO-SAR Program in collaboration with Pennsylvania State University and the U.S. Geological Survey. [contact](#)



Strategies for Biodiversity Conservation and Promotion of Advanced Agricultural Practices, Maharashtra, India

JalaSRI - Watershed Surveillance and Research Institute, Jalgaon along with other Indian and Italian collaborators is working on a pilot project for assessment of native biodiversity and existing traditional agricultural practices in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra, India. The overall goal of the project is to evolve strategies for biodiversity conservation and promotion of advanced agricultural practices for the sustainable development in district. A series of activities including mapping, spatial analysis, and field surveys were undertaken to generate spatial and non-spatial datasets, which represent the biophysical features of Jalgaon district. JalaSRI, Jalgaon has generated a good information base on examined the impact of existing traditional agricultural practices on crop yield and further based on scientific recommendations, initiated a set of noble field watershed development activities. This project has been regarded as a first step towards implementing e-governance practice for protecting natural wealth and improving overall agricultural productivity (of crop and soil) for sustainable development in the district. [more](#)



Protection and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity - The Sabana-Project, Cuba

The Archipelago Sabana-Camagüey, extended approximately 465 km along north-central Cuba, sustains a great diversity of marine and terrestrial species as well as ecosystems. Its main productive activities are fisheries, tourism, agriculture/livestock and forestry. The Sabana-Camagüey UNDP/GEF Project, in its three phases since 1993, has been devoted to the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity of this ecologically sensitive ecosystem. Through a broadly participative, integrating and coordinating process and working closely with national and local governments with key stakeholders, local communities and

scientific institutions, the following objectives were achieved: Knowledge of socioeconomic and environmental contexts, as well as their problems, opportunities, barriers and trends; Environmental Strategic Plan (being implemented); Significant influence on development master-planning in sensitive areas; Improved education and awareness about biodiversity, environment, sustainable use and Integrated Coastal Management (ICM); Eight new marine/terrestrial protected areas; Seven territories declared and certified as “Zones under ICM Regime”. [contact](#)

IUCN



IUCN's New Deputy Director General starts work

New DDG Poul Engberg-Pedersen started work in May. At meetings with staff and Council, he suggested a few areas where he hoped his background in development, management and research would enable him to make a significant contribution to IUCN. These include strengthening programme delivery with a simpler business model for better results on the ground; sharpening our knowledge products across the Secretariat and Commissions; and getting the best out of a unique but complex Union, working under one vision and the One Programme approach.



Call for contributions for Forum events at the 2012 Congress

The Call for Contributions for the Forum segment of the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress is now open! The Congress will take place from 6 to 15 September 2012, in Jeju, Korea. We recommend that you read the [instructions](#) carefully before submitting your event. [Click here](#) for the latest updates and information about the Congress, and to access the Call for Contributions. Deadline 15 October 2011. Please direct any questions to congressforum@iucn.org.



IUCN'S EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Programme on biodiversity and climate change

Europe Overseas Forum: New e-mail discussion group for those interested in advancing biodiversity and climate change action in Europe's overseas territories and the regions they are located in (all 4 corners of the world). We launched the Forum in March and it is now up and running. It would be great if you could help spreading the word about this new communication tool and engage more people. [More](#)

Announcements



The Society for Ecological Restoration has opened the registration for SER2011 World Conference on Ecological Restoration to be held August 21-25 in Merida, Mexico.

SER2011 will be an important forum for addressing the global challenges of biodiversity and habitat loss, climate change, and sustainable development. It will provide a global venue for professionals, researchers, students and the public to come together, learn and share their knowledge and experiences, and identify practical solutions for restoring nature and sustaining critical ecosystem goods and services. [more](#)



International Conference “Ecosystem Services: from Science to Practice”

From 4-7 October 2011 the Ecosystem Services Partnership (ESP) will organize its 4th International conference on “*Ecosystem Services: from Science to Practice*”, in Wageningen, The Netherlands, chaired by Rudolf de Groot, IUCM-CEM Global theme leader on Ecosystem Services. Key-outputs of the conference will be the launch of a Global Network of expert-groups and key-sites in all major biomes on ecosystem services research, management and restoration, and the launch of the Ecosystem Services Valuation Database (ESVD), partly as a result of the Global TEEB-study (www.teebweb.org) and as contribution to the newly created Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).CEM members are very welcome to participate in the conference and/or actively contribute to these key-outputs. [more](#)

Publications

The Scottish Wildlife Trust has produced a new report *Climate Connections: towards low carbon high biodiversity economies* which was launched at the European Union Green Week conference in May 2011. The report explains how the maintenance of ecosystem health can play a key role in helping balance Scotland's carbon budget and create a low carbon, high biodiversity economy. [Download](#)

TEEB Report for Business - The final draft of the TEEB report for Business is now with the publishers and will be released later this year. In the meantime, Earthmind maintains a large library of case studies and reference materials at <http://teebforbusiness.earthmind.net/> which may be of interest to CEM members.

Haseeb Md. Irfanullah 2011. Conserving threatened plants of Bangladesh: miles to go before we start? *Bangladesh Journal of Plant Taxonomy* **18**(1): 81-91 [Download](#)

Dey, P. and Sarkar, A.K. 2011. Revisiting indigenous farming knowledge of Jharkhand (India) for conservation of natural resources and combating climate change. *Indian J. Traditional Knowledge* 10(1): 71-79. [contact](#)