

IUCN South-Eastern European e-Bulletin

Dear colleagues,

IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe (SEE) has the pleasure to introduce the fifth issue of our e-bulletin. As always, the bulletin has been prepared with your active involvement and we thank you for sending such valuable information on development of your projects in the region, events and publications related to nature conservation.

We have the pleasure to introduce a new member of IUCN SEE staff, Mr Alois Lang, Green Belt Coordinator, who will be based in Fertő-Hanság National Park in Hungary. We are also introducing Wilderness Fund, an NGO member of IUCN from Bulgaria. There is plenty of news and updates awaiting for you in this issue. Enjoy your reading and we are looking forward to cooperate with you again for the preparation of the new issue.

Please note that this bulletin is also available on the website of IUCN Regional Office for Europe at www.iucneurope.org.

Best wishes for the coming summer season!

IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe

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IUCN SEE – New Staff



As of July this year, **Alois Lang** will start to work with the IUCN SEE team as the new IUCN Green Belt Coordinator. He lives in Eastern Austria, where he has been working for the Lake Neusiedl National Park for twelve years, setting up public relations and eco-tourism in close cooperation with the Hungarian National Park administration of Fertő-Hanság. Renewable energies, music and motor-cycling are part of his hobbies. Although Alois will spend only a few working-days in the Belgrade office, he is looking forward to join our team. Welcome!

News

1 **Wilderness Fund – the first Bulgarian NGO member of IUCN**



Established in 1989, Wilderness Fund (WF) is a society of experts in natural and social sciences, joining their efforts for long-term preservation of Bulgarian and Balkan nature – unique part of European and global heritage. Main activities to achieve this basic objective are designation, enlargement and management of protected areas network, conservation of rare and endangered flora and fauna species and habitats. WF, the first Bulgarian NGO who became IUCN member, works in cooperation with other Bulgarian, foreign and international organisations.

Numerous projects in 15-years WF's life are related to ecological networks development, such as NATURA 2000, PEEN SEE Map, biodiversity inventory and conservation activities in Western Rhodopes, Central Balkan, Strandja, and West Stara Planina. The Society initiated the development of Bulgarian and Balkan Bear Conservation Programme, and Balkan Large Carnivores Network – BalkanNet. These WF achievements were acknowledged by Henry Ford Foundation prize for natural heritage protection in 1997. Experts and members of WF have also been involved in the development of national environmental legislation, verification of Bulgarian National Parks and Nature Reserves boundaries, elaboration of Management Plans for National and Nature Parks, development of National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Self-assessment of National Capacity for the implementation of the Convention of Biodiversity, Large Mammals and plants conservation activities.

Further information on WF is available from **Geko Spiridonov**, *President*, or **Zoya Borisova**, *Director*, office@wf-bg.org.

2 NGO capacity building – IUCN calls for applications



IUCN SEE invites environmental NGOs working on conservation of nature and biodiversity and sustainable development, and in particular those dealing with transboundary cooperation in nature conservation, to apply for Training in networking and communication, to be held in the week of the 17 October on Skadar Lake. The training will last 3 days and will be conducted in English. Email applications should be sent to maja.zitkovic@iucn.org no later than 4 July and should contain a letter of interest (1-2 pages) stating the working area of your NGO (including transboundary aspects if any), reasons for a candidate from your NGO to attend the training and how will the training contribute to the improvement of your work. Selection of NGOs will be competitive as we shall

invite only 3-4 eligible NGO representatives to attend the training. Eligible NGOs will be based or work in Dinaric Arc area (please see the map) of the following countries: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro (focus on Montenegro) and Albania.

This training is part of IUCN's "NGO Capacity Building for Cross-border Conservation on the Balkans" project, financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGCS). The first phase of the project focuses on Dinaric Arc Initiative supported by WWF Mediterranean Office, UNESCO ROSTE, IUCN, UNDP and the Council of Europe (read more about the Initiative in this bulletin), and therefore NGOs eligible to apply must work in this geographical area.



In the second phase of the project, IUCN will organise the training for the remaining SEE countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro (focus on Serbia), and Macedonia).

For more information please contact **Maja Zitkovic**, *Project Officer*, IUCN SEE, maja.zitkovic@iucn.org.

3 Turkey reports on conservation priorities for large carnivores



Turkey has several species of large carnivores that are ecologically, economically, and scientifically important. However, scientific information on large carnivores in Turkey has been historically very limited, thus creating an obstacle for effective conservation planning of these species. A recent report "*Status, Conservation and Management of Large Carnivores*", written by Ozgun Emre Can, member of IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Wolf, Cat, Hyaena and Canid Specialist Group, revealed the status of wolf, brown bear, lynx, striped hyaena, leopard and Caspian tiger in

Turkey. The report which was prepared upon the request of the Council of Europe, also presented specific recommendations to secure the future of large carnivores in Turkey for the first time. Restructuring the governmental organization responsible for wildlife conservation, and developing bilateral or multilateral contacts with other countries for scientific and conservation purposes, were among the 37 specific recommendations proposed. The report presented the information gathered from the field

within the framework of several carnivore field studies conducted between the periods of 1998-2004, and it was recently presented at the "Seminar on transboundary management of large carnivore populations" in Slovenia, 15-17 April 2005. Copy of the report can be requested from the author at ozgunemrecan@gmail.com.

4 Tourism development threatens the Central Balkan National Park



Central Balkan NP, Bulgaria: Recently, the Bulgarian media announced the intentions of some Municipalities on the northern periphery of the Central Balkan National Park (NP) to build enormous tourist complex of modern hotels, ski-runs and lifts that would have daily capacity of 20 000 persons and that would go through the two of the Park's most valuable Strict Reserves. Implementation of such plans would even require changes in the Protected Areas Act.

Central Balkan NP is one of the largest and most valuable protected areas in Europe. It is one of the three most valuable territories of NATURA 2000 and IBA networks in Bulgaria. Preliminary assessments indicate that NP is also an Important Mammal Area (IMA) and Important Plant Area (IPA). Its 1900 vascular plant species present approximately half of Bulgarian flora diversity, while with over 50 individuals, the Park is one of the most important places for brown bear conservation in Europe. It preserves the most stable population of wildcat, endemic Balkan chamois, over 20 bat species, including globally threatened ones. Globally threatened imperial eagle and corncrake, golden eagle, sacred falcon, owl and woodpecker species are also common in the NP.

Wilderness Fund (WF) is anxious about the threat to one of the most valuable protected areas in Europe and appeals for effective international support to save this heritage for the future mankind. More information is available on www.centralbalkannationalpark.org, www.visitcentralbalkan.net or from **Zoya Borisova**, *Administrative Director*, WF, zoya@wf-bg.org.

5 Timis River - New priority site for transboundary cooperation

Timis River, Romania: Torrential rains battered western Romania at the end of April, flooding thousands of homes and disrupting rail and road traffic in what local officials said were the worst floods in 50 years. The Romanian Ministry of Environment said the worst situation was in Timis county, on the border with Serbia and Montenegro, where 2,500 houses and 30,000 hectares of crops were destroyed. In the neighboring Vojvodina, hundreds of homes were flooded and dozens of livestock drowned.

The Timis River (Serbian Tamis) is one of the Danube tributaries, slowly moving in its lower course through the flat Pannonian plain. Along the most of its upper stretch in Romania, the river has been canalized and embankments were built along its banks. Near the Serbian – Romanian border, dams were not well maintained and could not retain the flood in early 2005. Being within the European Green Belt, this area is of special interest, as the still existing floodplains are important habitats for White Stork and many other species. Apart from being important for nature conservation, these floodplains are crucial for providing long-term protection from floods. While villages need adequate flood protection, the alluvial plain has to be preserved like the case is around the Croatian Lonjsko Polje Nature Park (see http://www.ecrr.org/pdf/3rd_conference_abstracts/15_gugic_cosic.pdf). For further information contact **Marko Tucakov**, mtucakov@EUnet.yu or **Martin Schneider-Jacoby**, martin.schneider-jacoby@euronatur.org.

6 Biodiversity indicators in Albania

With support of REC, the Ministry of Environment of Albania has recently identified 213 indicators that will better characterize biodiversity of the country and that are related to four policy issues: responsibility for conservation of biodiversity, protection of biodiversity through the network of protected areas, integration of biodiversity issues in sectorial policies and climate change and biodiversity. With 3200 flora and 756 fauna species, biodiversity monitoring in Albania is of high importance. The 2002 decision of the Council of Ministers on environmental monitoring defines the state, impact and generic indicators for biodiversity as well as research institutions that measure them. Some of these indicators, such as diversity of ecosystems and habitats in protected areas and waters, threatened species, human impacts on biodiversity, are measured at main coastal lagoons by the Institute of Biological Research and the Museum of Natural Sciences. More information is available from **Ariana Koça**, Ministry of Environment, arianakoca@yahoo.com.

7 Give gravel back to Drava!

Drava River, Croatia: An international NGO coalition - the Drava League, Green Action, Drava Federation, DOPPS-Birdlife Slovenia, Euronatur and WWF started the campaign "Save the Drava" in 2003, with the aim to stop extensive plans of the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management for further gravel and sand extraction along the ecologically important Drava River in Croatia. After a few years of negotiation and advocacy, this Ministry purchased in March licenses for twenty sites along the Drava comprising in total about 2 020 000 m³ of gravel and sand to be extracted in the next three to four years. This plan, which foresees more sediment extraction on the Drava than ever before in such a short timeframe, might lead to extensive environmental and nature devastation along the river. It would affect highly important ecological areas such as Kopacki Rit Nature Park, Danube-Drava National Park, and proposed Natura 2000 sites in Hungary. Recently, the Croatian nature protection authorities asked for immediate halt of the public tender, as Mura and Drava areas are under temporary protection, soon to be designated as Regional Park (IUCN protected area category V).

Within the "Save the Drava" campaign, the Ecological Society Franjo Koscec organised the second European championship "Zabica" ("Froggy") on the 30 April in the area of Beli Kipi near Varazdin. "Zabica" is a game of skimming stones on water, so that they bounce across the surface. The event had a symbolic meaning as it promoted protection of Drava River gravel, under a slogan "Give gravel back to Drava". The competition took place in the part of Drava which has already been devastated by gravel excavation and regulation works. Choosing this location aimed at raising public awareness about the excavation problem. For more information contact **Irma Popovic**, Assistant, Green Action, irma@zelena-akcija.hr.

8 Forest management course for the Balkan Peace Park

The Committee of the First Balkan Peace Park Prokletije (BPPP) meets regularly with representatives from the three regions (Albania/Montenegro/Kosovo). Most recently further visits were made to the Yorkshire Dales National Park (UK) on the eve of the implementation of a new policy of "open access" whereby the public gains the right to walk on land even under private ownership. Plans were set in motion for a 5-day course in forest management specially designed for 2 participants from each of the three BPP regions, in the autumn of 2006. Meanwhile the archaeological research Shala Valley Project will involve specialists from the US, the UK and from the BPP region for a full month (June-July) as part of a 5-year project which will result in publications and conference contributions. A travelling exhibition of photographs and text related to the BPP is currently on view at Bradford University in the UK, having been returned for exhibition at the European Peace University, Burg Schlaining in Austria (it is available for show elsewhere, contact: a.t.i.young@bradford.ac.uk).

9 Safe nests for White Storks



Vojvodina, Serbia and Montenegro: White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* is a widespread migratory bird, breeding near open natural or extensively cultivated lowlands. It uses variety of structures for nest construction, predominantly roofs and electricity poles. According to the results of the last survey of its distribution and population size, carried out by The Bird Study and Protection Society of Vojvodina (BSPSV) in 2000, 998 pairs bred in Vojvodina. While most of the straw stacks vanished due to changed practice of straw conservation, the number of nests on electric poles suddenly increased. Currently, 26 per cent of all White Stork pairs in Vojvodina breed in these niches. However, the risk of breeding on such nests is high for both birds and power supply company. Nests situated on wires, as well as birds themselves, can cause a short-circuit while death by ground-fault is even more frequent. Bird-induced electrical outages cause substantial costs.

Supported by the Dutch Embassy in Serbia and Montenegro, BSPSV has initiated practical solution for this problem within the project "Safe Nests for White Storks". In close cooperation with "Elektrovojvodina", the provincial power-supply company, 61 metal nest-supporting platforms were constructed. Platforms have been erected prior to the breeding season in spring 2005, in ten priority project settlements in central Banat. It is expected that about 90 per cent of these new and safe nesting sites will be occupied by breeding White Storks in 2005 already. For more information please contact **Marko Tucakov**, Project coordinator, BSPSV, mtucakov@eunet.yu.

10 **SOR improves roosting sites of Red-breasted Goose**



Romania: The Red-breasted Goose is one of the rarest goose species in the world. The current wintering areas of this species are on the Black Sea coast - on the Danube Delta and Dobrogea plateau in Romania and Lakes Shabla and Durankulak in Bulgaria. To protect the Red-breasted Goose, the Romanian Ornithological Society (SOR) started a LIFE project, in cooperation with national and local authorities, the National Administration of Romanian Water - Directorate of Dobrogea Seacoast and Techirghiol Mayorality. The anticipated results of the project would include creation of safe

roosting conditions at the key site (Lake Techirghiol) and suitable feeding grounds in the vicinity of the lake in order to maintain and protect 17 per cent of the world population. Hunting and disturbance from other human activities at roosting sites and feeding grounds, deterioration of the key roosting sites and poor availability of additional food sources during the coldest winter months, represent some of the main threats to the Red-breasted Goose. For more information contact **Orieta Hulea**, *Project coordinator*, SOR, ohulea@yahoo.com and office@sor.ro

11 **Water level control of Lake Mikri Prespa**



Mikri Prespa Lake, Greece: Mikri Prespa Lake is a Ramsar site, a National Park and one of the most important ecosystems of the transboundary (Greece, Albania and FYR of Macedonia) Prespa Park area. It hosts the largest colony of Dalmatian Pelicans worldwide and the largest colony of Pygmy Cormorants in the EU. These two species, as well as many other bird species, are directly dependent on the existence of wet meadows at the littoral zone of the lake. Currently, total surface of wet meadows is very small due to a lack of appropriate vegetation management, and their flooding regime largely

depends on weather conditions and management of the newly reconstructed sluice in the Koula channel, from which water flows from Lake Mikri to Lake Megali Prespa. This sluice regulates the water level of Mikri Prespa and is one of the major components of the LIFE – Nature project “Conservation of priority bird species in Lake Mikri Prespa, Greece” which is being implemented since July 2002 by The Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP). After completion of the sluice reconstruction last December, SPP and the Municipality of Prespa organised an inauguration event on 14 May, attended, among others, by the Mayor of Prespa L. Nalpantidis and the Director of SPP, M. Malakou. For more information please contact **Fotini Vakitsidou**, *Communication Officer*, SPP, f.vakitsidou@spp.gr.

12 **Action for Djerdap without waste**

Djerdap NP, Serbia and Montenegro: Ecolibri-Bionet, the Agency for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development, in cooperation with the Agency for Recycling of Serbia, organised the first Educational Caravan on waste management, titled “Iron Gate Gorge Without Waste”. A multi-disciplinary team of experts travelled along the gorge and Djerdap National Park, raising awareness within local communities and primary schools on the impact of waste on nature and environment and the importance of recycling process.

Djerdap, the biggest National Park in Serbia, which contains one of the longest and most attractive gorges in Europe, has become endangered by waste pollution. Waste dumps are polluting water, terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals and generally cause bad impressions in terms of scenery for the visitors. Education on waste treatment should continue, thus ensuring protection of this important European natural heritage. More information is available from **Jovan Angelus**, *Executive Director*, Ecolibri-Bionet, jangelus@eunet.yu.

13 **IFOAM website re-launched**

IFOAM, the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements, re-launched its website with improved user-friendly menu and enlarged content. IFOAM has introduced new sections such as a bookstore, a training platform and an online application for membership. Please visit www.ifoam.org

Events

1 “Together for the Prut River” conference



Galati, Romania, 21-22 March: The Eco Counselling Centre Galati (ECCG) together with the Ecological Movement of Moldova (MEM) organized the Inception Conference “Together for the Prut River”- within the UNDP/GEF “The Prut Basin Wide Approach for Nutrient Reduction and Cross Border Cooperation” project. The project focuses on facilitating a watershed regional cross-border cooperation during the development of a draft Prut River Basin Management Plan and in applying concrete measures to reduce the nutrient - pollution sources in two pilot mirror-areas, one in Romania and the other in Moldova. The conference brought together almost 90 participants

including decision-makers, representatives of governmental bodies, NGOs, scientific experts, teachers and students from both countries, in order to build a common vision, share knowledge and information and make commitments about the Prut River. The conference focused on the EU Water Framework Directive and its application in Romania, with special attention to public participation, transboundary cooperation, protected areas, water quality, the Prut Basin Management Plan, nutrients-health related issues, and wetland restoration. More information is available at www.cceg.ro/eng/projectPrut.htm or from **Petruta Moisi**, *President*, ECCG, petrutamoisi@cccg.ro.

2 German Delegation visits IUCN SEE Office

Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 4-6 April: Two delegations from the Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the Centrum für Internationale Migration (CIM) and the German Embassy visited IUCN SEE office to discuss the IUCN project portfolio. CIM is currently co-funding two staff positions at IUCN SEE (the Director and the Green Belt Coordinator) and is a branch of GTZ, which works as privately managed executive organisation of the German Government (BMZ). The delegation was specifically interested in potential networking with other German projects and colleagues in the region.

Based on a visit to Fruska Gora National Park, IUCN and a representative of the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia presented the IUCN project portfolio and the main Initiatives Green Belt and Countdown 2010. Special emphasis was given to already existing collaboration with CIM-Colleagues in the public awareness campaigning/information and communication sector, sustainable tourism development and Bicycle Trail along the Danube River (GTZ). Potential involvement of the IUCN expertise in the development of the Adriatic Coastal Zone (GTZ-Projects) was also discussed. Please visit www.gtz.de and www.cimffm.de or contact Joerg.Lohmann@iucn.org for further information.

3 New trainers in wetland management



Wageningen, Netherlands, 4-22 April: The International Agricultural Centre (IAC) and the Dutch Institute for Inland Water Management (RIZA) have organised a “Training of Trainers in Wetland Management, a course focusing on facilitating multi-stakeholder processes and curriculum development”, in IAC premises in Wageningen and Terschelling island. The course gathered 21 international participant from governmental and non-governmental sectors involved in wetland management. The Dutch government provided funds for three professionals from South-Eastern Europe (SEE) to attend the course, and the chosen candidates were

representatives of the Green Action NGO (Croatia), the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia (Novi Sad Department) and IUCN SEE office.

The course focused on three key topics: multi-stakeholder processes in wetland management, management planning and curriculum development. It included diverse methods of training while the participants had the opportunity to practice their skills as future trainers. The course also involved one-day field visit to Biesbosch wetland where the attention was given to integrated wetland management, and one-week visit to Terschelling island on the North Sea, where the participants interviewed key stakeholders in wetland management and practiced elaboration of a Management Plan for the island. For further information about the course please contact maja.zitkovic@iucn.org.

4 IUCN supports Zasavica Tourism Plan

Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 15 April: Upon the invitation of Violeta Orlovic, E-team Belgrade, IUCN SEE supported the promotion of a publication on development of methodology and tourism management plan in Zasavica Special Nature Reserve at the International Tourism Fair in Belgrade. During the passed year, CENORT, the E-team, NGO Goranski Ekoloski Pokret and the Zasavica Special Nature Reserve, and in cooperation with ETE, Bonn and CEEWEB Hungary, have been working on Tourism Management Plan Methodology for Zasavica, being supported by the UNEP/REC/IUCN Biodiversity Service. At the fair, the invitees, including the local community, discussed the Tourism Development Plan for Zasavica. IUCN stressed the interest and potential for transferring this management plan model to other areas with similar conditions such as the Sava River ecological networking. Please visit www.cenort.org.yu or contact **Violeta Orlovic**, *Environmental Consultant*, DAI, violeta_o@yahoo.com for further information.

5 Conservation of medicinal plants at the International Horticulture Fair

Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 15 April: IUCN SEE joined a workshop at the International Horticulture Fair and International Exhibition of Medicinal Herbs and Honey Products "Nature Gifts" in Belgrade. This event intended to connect healthy living of people with natural environment and natural resource use (www.balkanherbs.org).

IUCN was invited by Denzil Philips, Associate Expert for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants for the EU-ACP Centre for Development of Enterprise and for the World Bank SEED. IUCN made use of this opportunity to present its project portfolio and main activities in SEE as well as to extend the institutional network regarding species protection and public private partnership in sustainable use of natural resources. Further on, IUCN introduced a project proposal from the Species Survival Commission (SSC) "Towards the Sustainable Use and Conservation of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAP) in the Balkans" - establishment of a regional network dialogue, capacity building application of conservation assessment techniques and development of local projects. The overall goal of the project is to improve conservation and sustainable use of MAP and their habitats in the Balkans and facilitate local participation in conservation and decision-making prior to EU accession. Based on the project introduction, IUCN stimulated cooperation between IUCN SSC and SEED as one option for integrated biodiversity conservation. For further information about the project please contact **Petra Crofton**, IUCN SSC, Petra.Crofton@ssc-uk.org.

6 IUCN discusses its Protected Area Categories System in Turkey

Kusadasi, Turkey, 19-22 April: As part of the "Biological Diversity and Natural Resources Management" project, a well attended workshop was held at Kusadasi, Aydin, in order to brief participants from governmental and NGO sectors about the IUCN Protected Area (PA) Categories System and to discuss its application to PAs in Turkey. The workshop was facilitated by Lee Thomas, who has had significant experience in the application of IUCN PA categories globally. Peter Shadie from IUCN PA Programme in Switzerland provided an overview of IUCN and European Birds and Habitats Directives which may have a bearing on the development of a national PA system in Turkey.

During the final two days of the workshop, the participants visited Bafa Lake Nature Park and Dilek Peninsula National Park to see how IUCN categories match with the existing classifications. This workshop will be followed by a workshop about RAPPAM on 15-16 June in Ankara and in collaboration with WWF. More information is available from **Suade Arancli**, *Project Coordinator*, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, projectcoord@gef-2.org.

7 57 years for conservation of nature in Serbia

Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 21 April: On the 21 April, the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia marked its 57th Anniversary of work by presentation of activities and results achieved in nature conservation, as well as the two latest projects of the Institute's Education and Publishing Department. One project was implemented in cooperation with Geokarta and it resulted with development of geographical maps showing Serbia's protected natural properties (scale 1:300 000 and 1:1 000 000). Data contained on the maps include 448 protected properties. The event was followed by the opening of a permanent exhibition "Nature of Serbia and Protection", which will enable wider public to get acquainted with ecosystems and Serbia's national parks, various specimen of flora, fauna and geo-heritage, as well

as numerous published materials of the Institute. More information is available from **Maja Radosavljevic**, PR, Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia, maja@natureprotection.org.yu.

8 “Borders separate, nature unites”

Brussels, Belgium, 1 May: The IUCN Green Belt Secretariat in Brussels handed over the project responsibility to IUCN SEE office at which Alois Lang will coordinate further activities related to the Green Belt. The Coordinator's post is subsidized by the German CIM (Centrum für internationale Migration und Entwicklung).

The first task of Alois Lang's official start of employment will be to intensify contacts with partners in the Green Belt countries – this will be done through a request for addresses of the management and stakeholders in transboundary protected areas (TBPA), whereupon data will be collected for creating short and clear presentations of the TBPAs throughout the Green Belt. The second urgent task is to establish a working place in Hungary, where IUCN is friendly invited to use space in the Fertő-Hanság National Park's administration building in Sarród.

Following the Programme of Work, the Green Belt Coordinator will get in touch with the regional coordinators and focal points in the Fennoscandian, Central European and South-East European Belt to discuss transboundary projects and options, and to cooperate in promoting both the biological and economic functions of the Green Belt. For further information visit www.greenbelteurope.org or contact **Alois Lang**, IUCN Green Belt Coordinator, Alois.Lang@iucn.org.

9 Mediterranean marine turtles in focus

Kemer-Antalya, Turkey, 4-7 May: In view of the success of the first conference conducted in Rome in October 2001, the Second Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles aimed at bringing together field biologists, conservationists, government administrators and other professionals from all Mediterranean countries involved in sea turtle research and conservation. The conference was organised by the Barcelona Convention (RAC/SPA), the Bern Convention, the Bonn Convention (CMS), the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Turkey, the IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group (Mediterranean Region) and WWF Turkey. The participants presented the most recent scientific findings and developments associated with sea turtle research, management and conservation aspects in the Mediterranean region, emphasizing the value of regional cooperation and integration of environmental information with economic and social aspects. More information is available from **Aybars Altiparmak**, Assistant Expert, General Directorate of Nature Conservation and Forests, aybarsozlem@hotmail.com.

10 Maximum knowledge and minimum intervention in Hatila Valley



Artvin Province, Turkey, 5-7 May: With its 18 000 ha, Hatila Valley National Park (NP) in the Caucasus Mixed Forest Ecoregion is valued for its old-growth forests, endemic herbaceous plants and large carnivores. For some years a bark beetle *Ips typographus* L. has been causing significant damage on spruce *Picea orientalis* L. stands. TEMA-METU-BTC Co., a consortium of NGO, University and a private company, decided to bring all stakeholders together to make a decision about further steps in forest management. A three-day workshop with technical support from IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) resulted with a collective, concrete action plan that accepts the bark beetle epidemic as part of the natural system, possibly provoked by climate change. This means no intervention within the NP to let ecological and evolutionary processes take their course unless the surrounding non-conservation forests are seriously affected. In the latter case, limited intervention is preferred to keep the intactness of the NP. More information is available from **Yesim Erkan**, Communications Director, TEMA, yesime@tema.org.tr.

11 International partnership for the Dinaric Arc

Podgorica, Serbia and Montenegro, 11-12 May: WWF Mediterranean Programme Office had recently started an initiative for the conservation of the Dinaric Arc, which was soon joined by IUCN and UNESCO-ROSTE. The objective of this Initiative is to create synergies and foster cooperation among international institutions, governments and civil-society with the overall aim to create favourable conditions for sustainable conservation of the Dinaric Arc area. The partners are aiming at establishing strengthened transboundary cooperation in nature conservation and at promoting programmes for

sustainable resource management in the area that spans from Slovenia through Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro to Albania. This area has been determined by various ecological factors.

After the initial gathering of the concerned partners in Rome, WWF Med, IUCN SEE and UNESCO-ROSTE met in Podgorica, joined by new partners, the Council of Europe and UNDP (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro offices and Bratislava Regional Centre). The meeting, organised by UNDP Liaison Office in Montenegro, focused on development of a framework for further cooperation and concrete actions to be undertaken, as well as giving an overview of ongoing projects in the Dinaric Arc area. The next meeting of the working group will be in October on Skadar Lake, and that gathering will be taken as the opportunity to introduce the Dinaric Arc initiative to a wider audience in this sub-region. For more information please contact maja.zitkovic@iucn.org.



12 IUFRO symposium on Zlatibor Mountain



Zlatibor, Serbia and Montenegro, 11-14 May: Forestry experts from the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia and IUCN SEE attended the IUFRO 7th International Symposium on Legal Aspects of European Forest Sustainable Development on Zlatibor Mountain. The intention was to introduce IUCN as another partner for harmonisation of forestry and nature conservation in SEE as well as to provide additional expertise from the conservation point of view.

According to the global approach of IUCN towards the forestry sector, which is specified in the IUCN Forest Conservation Programme and the IUCN/WWF Forests for Life Strategy, IUCN supports the integration of biodiversity into economics, such as the forestry sector, for sustainable development.

This year's IUFRO conference gathered forestry experts and nature conservation specialists who had the opportunity to find out current achievements and suggest to forestry policy makers how to cope with modern trends in sustainable management of forest resources. As an important outcome of the meeting, it can be noted that the forestry sector has started to change towards sustainable approach of integrated resource management, but still, it is necessary to continue this approach of providing, as well as accepting, common arrangements towards sustainable use in a participatory approach not only regarding forestry but also concerning nature conservation in Serbia. Please visit www.iufro-serbia.org or contact **Dragan Nonic**, Forestry Faculty, DNonic@eunet.yu, or **Boris Erg**, Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia, berg@eunet.yu for further information.

13 Action for risk reduction from mining in SEE

Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 11-13 May: Under the Environment and Security (EnvSec) Initiative (UNDP-OSCE-UNEP-NATO), UNEP is carrying out a project "Reducing EnvSec Risks from Mining in South Eastern Europe (SEE)". After a Desk Assessment, the project is entering the second phase, that will work towards implementation of the most promising options for risk reduction through demonstration at selected sites, and through an evaluation and testing of possible policy changes and transboundary cooperation mechanisms. At the same time first actions to build national and local capacities in hazard identification and risk reduction will be proposed.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Water Management of Romania, UNEP organised a sub-regional conference "Reducing EnvSec Risks from Mining in SEE and the Tisza River Basin" in Cluj-Napoca in May 2005. The conference was attended by high-officials Klaus Toepfer, UNEP Executive Director, Sulfina Barbu, Minister of Environment and Water Management of Romania, and Miklos Persanyi, Minister of Environment and Water of Hungary. The objective of the conference was to draw up an action programme to reduce environment and security risks from mining in the region, including further assessment and pilot projects at high-risk sites, and endorse guidelines for sustainable mining and closure of mines. For further information, please visit www.envsec.org.

14 Lonjsko polje shares experiences with the Institute from Serbia

Lonjsko polje, Croatia, 17-19 May: Representatives of the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia undertook a study trip to Lonjsko polje Nature Park in Croatia in May this year. Apart from strengthening regional cooperation, this trip enabled sharing of knowledge and experiences between the experts in nature conservation from the two countries. Lonjsko polje is one of the biggest and most important wetland areas in the whole Danube River basin. It has exceptional natural values, and also significant cultural heritage that is preserving traditional wooden house architecture, autochthonous breeds of domestic animals and traditional pasture practices. As one of the most proactive management authority in Croatia, Public Institution Lonjsko polje Nature Park has developed fruitful cooperation with local inhabitants by supporting them in activities such as development of rural accommodation facilities, private ethno collections, providing services as boating, riding etc. During the trip several sites were visited, among which are Krapje djol Special Ornithological Reserve - mixed heron colony with numerous breeding pairs of Spoonbills, Lonjsko polje - 80 km² large retention field which acts as flood prevention system during periods of high waters on Sava River, and Krapje - village with traditional architecture heritage. Experiences gained in Lonjsko polje will be beneficial for wetland managers and authorities in Serbia, where similar natural and cultural patterns exist. This kind of regional cooperation should be broadened in order to improve nature conservation and sustainable development practices. More information is available from **Boris Erg**, Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia, berg@eunet.yu.

15 Transfer of knowledge from the Netherlands to Serbia



Belgrade and Novi Sad, Serbia and Montenegro, 23 and 25 May:

Three workshops have been held in the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia in Belgrade and Novi Sad in order to build capacities of 47 Institute's staff in multi-stakeholder analyses in protected areas, team building and conflict management. The workshops were organised by two professionals from IUCN SEE and the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia (Department in Novi Sad) who attended the Training of Trainers in Wetland Management course in Wageningen in the Netherlands (please see more details about this training in this bulletin), and they focused on transfer of knowledge and skills gained

at that particular training. The workshops were interactive and included various methods such as group work, games, presentations. It is hoped that similar trainings will be offered in the future on a wider scale.

16 UNESCO-ROSTE launches environmental education project



Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 27-29 May: "Environmental Education for Sustainable Development - A Regional Training Project Scheme for the Adriatic-Ionian Basin (EESD)" is the title of a UNESCO-ROSTE coordinated project, financed by the Italian Government and jointly implemented with the University of Bologna and the University of Sarajevo. After a first inception phase – limited to the three Steering Committee members - a larger meeting was organised in Sarajevo, attended by representatives from other relevant institutions interested in development of environmental education in the region: UNITAR, IUCN SEE, OSCE, and Serbian

NGO School for Survival. The meeting was organised by the Centre for Technological Environmental Development (CETEOR) from Sarajevo University. The participants discussed a draft analytical report focused on environmental issues and education initiatives in SEE countries and identified key issues and needs in the region to be handled within the project framework.

Having decided to launch an experimental summer school on environmental education in Sarajevo in 2006, the Steering Committee will firstly develop the structure of a shorter course, to be held in Cervia, Italy, from 5-16 September this year, within the annual framework of the University of Bologna. The ultimate goal of the entire initiative is to develop and test an innovative higher education programme in environmental education for the SEE region. At this scope the establishment of a Regional Education and Information Centre for Sustainable Development in SEE – to be hosted by the University of Sarajevo – was identified as a necessary conceptual and operative incubator to guarantee a sustainable support to the initiative. For more information contact **Giorgio Andrian**, *Consultant*, UNESCO ROSTE, g.andrian@unesco.org.

17 Ecological network of the Sava River discussed in Sarajevo



Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 30 May-1 June: Alterra Research Institute from the Netherlands has finalised its project related to integrated Sava River basin management by final workshop that was held in Sarajevo, attended by GIS and species experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Centre for Ecology and Natural Resources CEPRES, Agricultural Institute Banja Luka), Serbia and Montenegro (Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia) and Croatia (State Institute for Nature Protection). The objective of the meeting was to overview available data on selected riverine habitats, select suitable species for the development of an ecological network, put distribution data on the map and analyse feasibility of GIS data gathering. The last day of the workshop was used to introduce in more detail IAC-IUCN project "Development of an Ecological Network of the Sava River" and define the next steps for implementation of this project. It is foreseen to hold a meeting with relevant institutions from Sava River basin countries in September at which IUCN and IAC will introduce the project's workplan and budget. For more information, please contact Sabine.vanRooij@wur.nl or maja.zitkovic@iucn.org.

18 A loud voice for the Little Tern

Croatia, 30 May-2 June: The Green Action NGO has organised a Little Tern Tour which visited Cakovec, Varazdin, Koprivnica, Virovitica, Osijek and Zagreb, with the aim to raise awareness about this bird species, an important indicator of the state of Drava River. The event was followed by media, including national and regional television stations, radio and newspapers.

Little Tern breeds on extensive gravel and sand banks, and Drava between the Croatian and Hungarian border offers good conditions for breeding. Most of the remaining parts of this river has been altered by development of HE dams, sediment extraction and river regulations. The survival of the Little Tern depends on safeguarding its habitat, thus the Croatian and Hungarian Water Management Authorities' plans for sediment extraction would endanger the survival of this bird species. More information is available at www.sterna-albifrons.net or from **Irma Popovic**, Assistant, Green Action, irma@zelena-akcija.hr.

19 Forest policy conference

Djurdjevac, Croatia, 6-9 June: Together with FAO and the European Confederation of Private Forest Owners (ECPF), IUCN SEE organised a workshop on "Development Drivers of Forest Policy in the Balkans Sub-Region" in Djurdjevac, Croatia. The workshop's goal was to provide possibility for the follow up of former workshops of this round table and corresponding country action plans and to identify barriers for implementation in the sub-region, to analyse further possible forest policy development driver issues and to improve the assistance directed to SEE countries. The objectives were to identify specific priority forest policy issues in the sub-regions' countries along forest policy driver issues, such as NFPs, certification and data/information collection, to clarify needs for assistance, especially with regard to private forestry, to promote assistance opportunities by the collaborating agencies, to develop ideas up to an activity plan and/or draft project proposal concerning private and state forestry issues and capacity building on information as well as to draft policy relevant recommendations.

IUCN SEE used the sub-regional workshop to further establish the link with the forestry sector as one of the crucial economic sectors with major responsibility and impact on biodiversity in SEE. At the same time IUCN and FAO discussed joint development of forestry related projects in the region. Please contact Attila.Lengyel@fao.org, Volker.Sasse@fao.org or Joerg.Lohmann@iucn.org for further information.

20 Vth Conference on the Alpine Protected Areas

Chambery, France, 13-15 October: The Network of Alpine Protected Areas, in cooperation with Vanoise National Park, announces the Vth Conference on the Alpine Protected Areas which will be held in France in October. At that occasion, the Network of Alpine Protected Areas will celebrate its 10 years of establishment. More information is available from **Emmanuelle Brancaz** at ebrancaz@alparc.org

21 Training on regional ocean governance

Malta, 14 November-16 December: The International Ocean Institute is launching a 5-week training course in Malta on Regional Ocean Governance for the Mediterranean and Eastern European Countries. The course will focus on the sustainable governance of the Mediterranean, Black, Baltic and Caspian

Seas and is targeted at mid-career professionals, government officials, educators, researchers and civil society participants with coastal/marine-related responsibilities or interests, particularly from developing countries of the Mediterranean and Eastern European countries. More details and application forms can be accessed from the course website: <http://capemalta.net/ioimoc/course> or from **Aldo Drago**, Director, IOI-Malta Operational Centre, ioi-moc@um.edu.mt

22 BALWOIS 2006

Ohrid, Macedonia, 23-26 May 2006: This is the first announcement for BALWOIS 2006 - International scientific conference on water observation and information system for decision support. Next year's conference will include various topics such as climate and environment, hydrological regimes and water balances, droughts and floods, integrated water resource management, hydrological modelling, lakes, ecohydrology etc. For more information please visit www.balwois.net or contact secretariat@balwois.net.

Funding opportunities

1 Call for proposals: CARDS

Summary: Call launched by the European Agency for Reconstruction to implement the Civil Society Programme

Title: Strengthening of Civil Society Associations for Social Dialogue in Kosovo

Regions: EU Member States, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, UN-administered Kosovo, FYR of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey

Who can apply: Agencies, Chambers - Associations - Development NGOs - Federations, Unions - Training centres

Amount awarded per project: 30 000 – 80 000 Euro

Closing date: 22 August 2005

Submission of proposals: EAR, Tel: 381 38 513 1200, Email: mimoza.selimi@ear.eu.int

2 Call for proposals: PHARE

Summary: New multi beneficiary Phare programme for 2005-2007 for Bulgaria and Romania

Title: Networking Programme - Civil Society Component - PHARE

Regions: Bulgaria and Romania, EU Member States

Who can apply: Agencies, Chambers - Associations - Development NGOs - Federations, Unions

Global budget: 2 million Euro

Amount awarded per project: 100 000 – 250 000 Euro

Closing date: 12 August 2005

Submission of proposals: EC, Henk Visser, Tel: 32 2 299 8552, henk.visser@cec.eu.int

3 Call for proposals: Turkey: Pre-accession financial assistance

Summary: Cooperation between NGO and public sector, within the Pre-Accession Assistance Programme

Title: Turkey: Improving Co-operation between NGOs and Public Sector and Strengthening the NGOs' Democratic Participation Level

Regions: Turkey

Who can apply: Associations - Development NGOs - Federations, Unions - Local and Regional authorities - Research centres - Universities

Global budget: 500 000 Euro

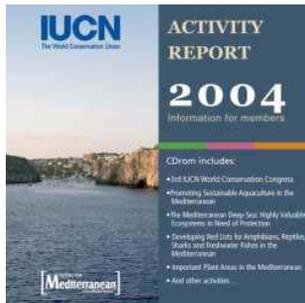
Amount awarded per project: 15 000 – 50 000 Euro

Closing date: 11 August 2005

Submission of proposals: Central Finance and Contracts Unit, Tel: 90 312 4723700, cemre.guzel@cfcu.gov.tr

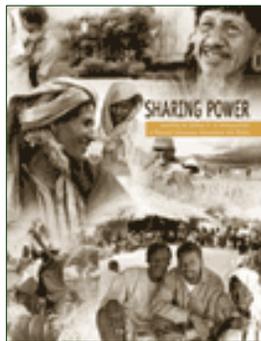
Publications

1 2004 Activity Report of IUCN-Med



Malaga, Spain, May: IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation released an Activity report for 2004 which intends to bring IUCN members and partners in the region up to date with activities carried out in this year. The Centre receives core support from the Consejería de Medio Ambiente of Junta de Andalucía and the Ministry of Environment (Spain). Most of the areas in which the Centre has focused in 2004 deal with the reinforcement of capacity and launching pilot activities to build a regional constituency, identifying how best to respond to the regional needs and context, adapting and adopting IUCN procedures to the local reality, while building working and personal relationships with key Spanish and Mediterranean partners. During the year, collaboration agreements have been reached with Fundación CONAMA, Seo Bird Life - Malaga Science and Technology Park, The Regional Activity Centre of Specially Protected Areas (RAC SPA), Italian Ministry of Environment, University of Valencia, Forum de Barcelona and the European Commission. For further information, please contact **Jamie Skinner**, Director, IUCN CMC, jamie.skinner@iucn.org.

2 Sharing power in management of natural resources



“Sharing Power – Learning by Doing in Co-Management of Natural Resources throughout the World” - behind this powerful title, you may find newest and the greatest written contribution to co-management of natural resources. This publication is based on years of experience and research, performed by Grazia Borrini Feyerabend, Michael Pimbert, Taghi Farvar, Ashish Kothari and Yves Renard, and in collaboration with local communities, associates and experts all around the world. The book was published by IIED and IUCN/CEESP/CMW and Cenesta. Within eleven chapters included, authors are guiding us from the Contextual framework (political and cultural context of natural resources management, its actors and co-management practices), towards Effective processes (partnership and process of co-management), Effective institutions (co-management agreements, organizations and learning by doing) to Enabling

social context (natural resource policy, civil society for policy change). High respect for local people's rights in protecting/developing natural resources, realistic approach and collaboration represent key issues in creating an understanding between the main actors in natural resources management.

More information is available on <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/#pub> or from **Violeta Orlovic**, Environmental consultant, DAI, violeta_o@yahoo.com.

3 Plantlife detects IPAs in Central and Eastern Europe

Plantlife International has recently published a new report “*Important Plant Areas (IPAs) in Central and Eastern Europe: Priority Sites for Plant Conservation*”, that has detected 800 priority sites for plant conservation in this region. Plantlife International's work has been supported by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. The report contains ten recommendations for local, national and European decision-makers on how to address the problem of increasing threats to Europe's most important places for wild plant diversity. The threats detected are: ineffective management and planning, inappropriate forestry practices, unsustainable tourism, agricultural intensification and abandonment of grasslands. For more information visit www.plantlife.org.uk or email to enquiries@plantlife.org.uk.

ROfE's Structure

Regional Office for Europe (ROfE) is a branch of The World Conservation Union (IUCN) global network. We along with offices and commissions around the world link back to the President, Director General and [Council of IUCN](#). For a history of IUCN and an explanation of the global structure please visit www.iucn.org. ROfE is comprised of four IUCN offices located in [Brussels](#), [Warsaw](#), [Belgrade](#) and [Moscow](#). The head office, located in Brussels, is a meeting point where the IUCN Programme Office for Central Europe in Warsaw, The IUCN Programme Office for the Commonwealth of Independent States in Moscow and the IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe in Belgrade can disseminate information and strategies. Together as ROfE we strive to meet our goals for a sustainable Europe by utilizing local expertise and the strength of the global IUCN network.

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