

IUCN South-Eastern European e-Bulletin

Dear IUCN friends and colleagues,

We are pleased to introduce the second issue of the IUCN South-Eastern European (SEE) e-Bulletin, which brings you some of the latest news from the SEE region related to transboundary parks and biodiversity conservation. In this issue, we are also announcing several important events and provide short reports on past events. Furthermore, you can find information on some funding opportunities, and find out more about a couple of IUCN publications.

This e-bulletin can also be found at IUCN ROfE website, so if you wish to read the articles on-line, please visit www.iucneurope.org.

Thanks to all of you who provided valuable comments on the first issue of the e-bulletin. We are looking forward to receiving articles and relevant information from the region for the next issue by mid-September. Please note that the third issue will be released at the end of October.

We wish you a happy and relaxing holiday season!

IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe

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News

1 Development of agriculture and tourism in Golija-Studenica Biosphere Reserve



Golija-Studenica, Serbia and Montenegro: Association for Ibar Valley Development (IDA), a non-profit organization specialised in rural development and environmental issues, received funding from The World Bank in May 2004 to implement a project "Golija-Studenica Biosphere Reserve (BR) - Possibility for Development of Agriculture and Tourism". The scope of the project is to explore possibilities for development of ecotourism, organic agriculture and agro-production in this, so far the only, BR in Serbia and Montenegro.

IDA intends to implement the project between July 2004 and March 2005 by undertaking various tasks: organising and facilitating discussions and workshops in the four municipalities (Novi Pazar, Ivanjica, Kraljevo and Raska), gathering all concerned and interested individuals and national and local institutions; drafting a document in Serbian and English, which will summarize the conclusions of these workshops and define the first Action Plan; and following up on the Action Plan.

The preparatory phase of the project is currently under way, in which IDA is examining potential outputs and relevant institutions that would be willing to support the project.

For more information please contact **Dragan Roganovic**, *Chairman*, IDA, tel: +381 36 313 403, e-mail: ibarda@ptt.yu.

2 Dalmatian Pelican nesting again on Skadar Lake



Skadar Lake, Serbia and Montenegro: By utilising great efforts, including media pressure on Skadar Lake National Park authority, the Centre for Bird Protection and Research of Montenegro succeeded in increasing the number of nesting pairs of Dalmatian Pelican, *Pelecanus crispus*, on Skadar Lake.

The Dalmatian Pelican nests throughout the world from Mongolia to Montenegro, making the Skadar Lake the westernmost nesting place of this bird species. There are around 5000 pairs in the world with a growing tendency. Unfortunately, survival of this species in Montenegro has been uncertain since 1990-ies and one of the reasons for this situation was the illegal oil transport route between Montenegro and Albania. This route transacted through the Pancevo Eye reserve, the pelican nesting place. The result was that from 1993 until 2000 there were no pelicans to be seen on Skadar Lake.

In 2002, pelicans were nesting again on Skadar Lake, but due to inaccessible terrain, the number of pairs could not be determined. A year later, seven pairs were counted, having ten nestlings. Finally, this year, eleven pairs were registered, but all visits to this colony were cancelled in order to leave the colony undisturbed.

It is interesting that neither in 2004 nor in 2003 pelicans built nests on two artificially established platforms. These platforms were built last year with the assistance of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and they are located in the vicinity of nesting places.

A lot of effort is being put on conservation measures to ensure the pelican colony's survival on Skadar Lake. However, due to various problems related to nature conservation of this particular area, such as illegal hunting, occasional disturbance caused by fishermen etc, it is still believed the colony is at the edge of survival.

For more information please contact **Darko Saveljic**, *Director*, The Centre for Bird Protection and Research of Montenegro, email: dasav@cg.yu.

3 Progress in the Prespa Lake transboundary park



Prespa Lake: Micro and Macro Prespa are two of the oldest lakes in Europe, well known for their high biodiversity, which includes the largest nesting colony of Dalmatian Pelicans (more than 1000 breeding pairs), endemic fish species and Brown Bear in the surrounding mountains. The beauty of their landscape, picturesque villages and a rich cultural heritage mainly from the Byzantine and Ottoman eras provide an added attraction for visitors.

The hydrological basin of the two lakes is shared by three countries – Albania, Greece and the FYR of Macedonia. At the proposal of WWF Greece and the Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP), the Prime Minister of Greece invited his counterparts from the other two neighbouring states to sign a declaration by which a transborder protected area, the Prespa Park, was designated. This declaration was signed on 2 February 2000 – World Wetland Day– in Aghios Germanos village. The Convention on Wetlands, and its MedWet Initiative, played crucial role in launching the Prespa Park, whose Co-ordination Committee, bringing together central and local government and NGOs, became operational in early 2001.

Three and a half years later, this Committee managed to build a good climate of collaboration and trust, develop effective procedures and make progress on many fronts. In addition, it was able to overcome pragmatically a number of political and bureaucratic hurdles. Perhaps its main achievement was the completion and approval of a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) by the three countries, which incorporates a joint vision of the area.

With the encouragement of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the German Reconstruction Bank (KfW), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat has approved preliminary funding of almost 1 million USD for preparatory actions leading to a proposal for a 15 million USD project for the Prespa area. These actions address key issues, such as the hydrological situation of the Prespa basin, increasing biodiversity, promoting sustainable use of local resources, and improving the co-ordination of management activities among the three countries. This work has already started and will be completed in early 2005.

Many other smaller actions have been carried out or are on the way, such as Prespa Park newsletter, printed in Albanian, Greek and Macedonian, and English. Collaboration is also growing among local authorities and services in Prespa, leading to useful common activities, such as the joint action of fire departments in preventing and combating forest fires. In addition, rapidly increasing flow of visitors to Prespa will require joint measures of facilitation, public awareness and control. The planning of land uses and infrastructure, as well as the maintenance of traditional architecture, represent further challenges. In all these issues, transborder co-operation can provide both incentives and solutions.

For more information contact **Thymio Papayannis**, *President*, SPP, email: thymiop@hol.gr.

4 Funds needed to help SOR's conservation efforts in the Romanian Danube Delta

The largest Dalmatian Pelican colony in Romania threatened by water erosion

In 2000, the European Dalmatian Pelican breeding population was estimated at 1300 to 1500 pairs. It is considered as one of the most threatened bird species in Europe. The largest Romanian colony of Dalmatian Pelican and the third largest colony in Europe consisted of 84 breeding pairs in spring 2004. This colony is nowadays severely threatened by continuous erosion of the pelicans' habitat.

The colony is located on a small island in Sinoie Lake within the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (BR). The island is a small sand bank about 350 m far from the shore. It is well hidden from human eyes behind the tall reedbeds of Lupilor levee, a strictly protected zone of the Reserve, thus insuring the seclusion needed by the pelicans. For breeding and roosting, the birds need areas totally isolated from the mainland by water, like this island in Sinoie Lake, in order to avoid predation by mammals (foxes, dogs, wild boars, jackals, etc) and human disturbance.

Storms and constant erosion caused by the major currents in Sinoie Lake have caused a 60% decrease in surface of the island. Although significantly reduced, the island could still be saved with urgent intervention. The Romanian Ornithological Society (SOR) in collaboration with the BR's authority is planning to build a wooden support wall to protect the island against erosion, thus preventing the loss of the Dalmatian Pelican colony.

The Vadu-Chituc wetlands have a chance for revival

The Wetlands of Vadu-Chituc are part of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve in Romania. The area is a mixture of different habitats such as salt steppe meadows, shallow brackish lakes with marshy areas and reed beds, and sand dunes towards the Black Sea. The area is of high importance for breeding and migratory birds, several of them being globally threatened, such as the Dalmatian Pelican, the Pygmy Cormorant, the Ferruginous Duck and the Red-breasted Goose.

The south-western part of the area, close to village Vadu, used to be a wetland with seasonal water cover. However, in the past five years, it has been destroyed by the construction of a small dam, which is used via a local road. The road prevents the seasonal flooding while providing seasonal water cover may help the area to recover. This is the target of another Romanian Ornithological Society's project, which aims to lease or purchase the most valuable areas of Vadu-Chituc wetlands, improve habitat for breeding birds, and enhance the natural environment of Chituc Important Bird Area (IBA) through active management. In order for the project to be successful, it is crucial to obtain participation of local inhabitants in Vadu as both man and birds are dependent on the natural resources of the Vadu-Chituc wetlands.

For more information about how you can help saving the Dalmatian Pelican in Romania, visit www.sor.ro or contact **Anastasia Moga**, *Communication Officer*, SOR, tel: +0264 438 086, email: anastasia.moga@sor.ro.

5 Tourism Management Plan for Zasavica Special Nature Reserve

Zasavica, Serbia and Montenegro: The association Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE), in cooperation with the Centre for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Development (CenORT), the Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB) and the E-Team, initiated a project "Development of a Methodology and Tourism Management Plan for Zasavica Special Nature Reserve", Serbia and Montenegro. The project was approved and supported by UNEP – Regional Office for Europe within the framework of Biodiversity Service. The management authority of Zasavica Special Nature Reserve (SNR) has been actively involved from the very beginning and together with the project initiators, they organized the first workshop, held in Sremska Mitrovica on 5 July, 2004.

Twenty local stakeholders participated in this workshop and for many of them that was the first opportunity to learn about sustainable tourism and biodiversity concepts, as well as to express their vision on the needs and priorities for tourism development in Zasavica SNR and surrounding area. Rich natural and cultural heritage and enthusiasm for protected area management were among the potentials recognized by the participants, while lack of tourism activities, coordination and plans, were some of the main weaknesses they perceived. Rural tourism, education of local people, promotion of traditional products and labelling have been highlighted as some of the priorities for the future tourism developments in the area.

One of the most important outcomes of this first step in the project was the motivation of participants to get actively involved in the next phases of the Management Plan development and its implementation. The next workshop for local stakeholders will be held in November 2004, when draft Tourism Management Plan will be presented and discussed.

To learn more about this initiative, please visit www.ceeweb.org or www.cenort.org.yu.

6 Restoration project proves a success in Gornje Podunavlje Nature Park

Gornje Podunavlje, Serbia and Montenegro: With a surface of 20 000 ha, Gornje Podunavlje Nature Park stretches along the left bank of the Danube River bordering Croatia. Its northern part, a 5000 ha large area in Monostorski rit, has been a location of a large wetland restoration project initiated at the beginning of 1990-ies. So far, the project proved to have successful results.

Gornje Podunavlje holds great ecological importance and preserved biodiversity, which resulted in designation of the area as a protected asset of the I category in 2001. It is also an Important Bird Area (IBA). Among many others, Gornje Podunavlje inhabits the greatest national populations of rare and endangered species such as White-tailed eagle, Black stork and Red deer, while some of the largest intact units of native forest, consisting of White willows, Black poplars and Common oaks, still exist in the southern part of the reserve.

Unfortunately, as many other wetlands in Europe, Gornje Podunavlje has undergone great changes by numerous hydro-regulations and drainage projects. One of the most influential was building of a great dyke along the Danube's left coast in the middle 1960's. More than 5000 ha of wetlands in the northern part of the reserve, called Monostorski rit, left completely detached from the Danube and its flood regime. This caused great negative impacts on flora and fauna, as well as on specific wetland geomorphology.

After 25 years of degradation of the Monostorski rit's biodiversity, a large restoration project was launched by "Vojvodinašume" state enterprise. Because of its comprehensiveness and complexity, this project had to be divided into several separate phases. Although it began more than 10 years ago by building of the drainage and sluice through the dyke, which reconnected flooded and non-flooded areas after 25 years, just this year the project started to give positive results. Namely, the second and probably the most important phase of the project finished this spring. According to plans, a 4 km long network of small channels was dug up with an aim to connect oxbows, branches and land depression with the Danube and in order to fulfil this part of marsh with water and to re-establish natural alluvial conditions. And what happened? Channels have started to overgrow with reed and sedges, and small fish and birds feeding on them are recorded. Simply, landscape has started to look natural-like again.

What is next? To continue with good practice, for sure. In front of us is the next phase of the project, which will be implemented in the northern part of the Monostorski rit. Successful fundraising will be determinant factor on the project's timeline.

For more information contact **Boris Erg**, *Nature conservation manager*, State enterprise "Vojvodinašume", tel: + 381 25 463 111, email: srpgp@EUnet.yu.

7 International recognition for Decani Monastery cultural values

Suzhou, China, 28 June – 7 July: After almost two decades, a part of heritage of Serbia and Montenegro is globally recognised under the UNESCO *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (the World Heritage Convention). Decani Monastery, located at the foot of the slopes of the Prokletije Mountains in the western part of the province Kosovo and Metohija, was added to the World Heritage List at the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee in Suzhou, China. Thus, the importance of the Decani Monastery's outstanding cultural values is shared worldwide.

The Decani Monastery was built in the mid 14th century by the Serbian King Stefan Decanski. In addition to being its founder's mausoleum, the Monastery represents the last important phase of Byzantine-Romanesque architecture in the region and the largest medieval church in the Balkans. As an exceptional synthesis of Byzantine and Western traditions, the Decani treasury is the richest in Serbia, with around 60 icons from the 14th to 17th centuries. It contains well-preserved Byzantine paintings with over 1000 individual depictions of saints, while also holding numerous Romanesque sculptures. The original marble floor is well preserved, as is the interior furniture.

Having a site inscribed at the World Heritage List has generally been regarded as a prestigious issue. The World Heritage Convention, which links both cultural and natural properties, serves to identify sites of outstanding value to humanity and to ensure their protection for future generations. Including 29 cultural and 5 natural properties added to the World Heritage List in Suzhou, there are now 788 properties worldwide, including 611 cultural, 154 natural and 23 mixed properties.

In addition to the newly inscribed Decani Monastery, Serbia and Montenegro has three World Cultural Heritage sites. These are Stari Ras and Sopocani (inscribed in 1979), Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor (inscribed in 1979) and Studenica Monastery (inscribed in 1986). Durmitor National Park represents the country's only World Natural Heritage site, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1980.

For more information on the World Heritage Convention visit <http://whc.unesco.org>.

8 The importance of cooperation between UNESCO/ROSTE and IUCN – a successful story of the June workshop



The first issue of this e-Bulletin announced the joint UNESCO/ROSTE-IUCN initiative of the international workshop on 'MAB Biosphere Reserve and transboundary cooperation in the SEE region', to be held in Belgrade and Tara National Park, Serbia and Montenegro, 13-17 June. In fact, it was the announcement of a small but meaningful challenge: to join the efforts at the levels of the international stakeholders, in cooperation with the national and local actors. At a couple of weeks of distance and with plenty of follow-up to carry on, it seems that the experiment was a successful one.

By a simple review of the relevant literature, anyone could easily find tracks of the previous UNESCO-IUCN cooperation at the respective top-levels, which began already when the major UN environmental programmes were generated. Just to limit the analysis to the two major UNESCO initiatives in the field of the natural and cultural protection and sustainable development (namely, the World Heritage and the Man and Biosphere Programme), a close cooperation between the two institutions is evident.

So, what's new with the June workshop?

Part of the answer lays on the original conceiving of a joint UNESCO/ROSTE-IUCN meeting, organised in cooperation with the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia and supported by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC): the aim to support a process in favour of biodiversity preservation and promotion of sustainable development - occurring in the South-Eastern European (SEE) countries - which generates from the local territorial dynamics. Having in mind a 'regional' approach, the need to promote a more fluent dialogue among the recently established nation states functioned as a driving force to focus on transboundary cooperation as one of the most appropriate frames for action. In particular, the flexible tool of the MAB Biosphere Reserves (rooted on a not-legally binding programme, to be implemented through a flexible zoning adaptable to the very local needs) was recognised as an appropriate frame to accommodate both the issue of biodiversity preservation and the needs for further development.

The workshop gathered around 100 international and regional experts from public and academic sectors, NGOs, governmental and international organizations, who discussed the above issues in plenary sessions and during the four thematic working groups.

By revising the vast material discussed during the workshop, some common indications are clearly emerging. Firstly, it is the need to harmonise actions at the three major scales of intervention - the international, the national and the local. Secondly, to cross the borders of the traditional mono-focused interventions (natural, cultural, social, etc.); the cultural and biological diversity can be protected only at the condition that the local population, as well as the political relevant actors, are properly involved. The final message was coral: the joint initiatives are worthy to be promoted, considering that the actors' diversity adds to a valuable richness at the conditions that some common scenarios are being designed. Full proceedings will be available in September 2004.

Each of us went back after the workshop with a 'set of homework' to do. UNESCO ROSTE is willing to continue to platform occasions of cooperation and mutual initiatives; in particular, the coming activities foreseen in the frames of the regular programmes (MAB, WH, IHP) as well as the smaller scale projects

(environmental education, natural and cultural assets) which are open to external proposals and contributions. For this purpose, an e-based forum has been activated just before the workshop (link at the UNESCO-ROSTE web-site: <http://portal/unesco.org/venice>), which represents a useful tool to exchange information and ideas on the ongoing activities.

For further details, visit the following websites: <http://portal.unesco.org>: official UNESCO portal; <http://whc.unesco.org>: World Heritage (WH); <http://www.unesco.org/mab>: Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB); or contact UNESCO ROSTE: **Philippe Pypaert**, *Head of Environmental Programme*, email: p.pypaert@unesco.org or **Giorgio Andrian**, *Environmental Programme Consultant*, email: g.andrian@unesco.org.

9 Progress in saving Gediz Delta

Gediz Delta, Turkey: Doğa Derneği (BirdLife in Turkey) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) continue to be involved in the efforts to save the Gediz Delta, one of the most important coastal wetlands in the Mediterranean. This site, on the Aegean coast of Turkey, has been identified by BirdLife International, as an Important Bird Area (IBA) because of its importance for Pygmy Cormorant, Dalmatian Pelican, Red-breasted Goose, Lesser Kestrel and Cinereous Bunting, all globally-threatened species. The conservation importance of the area has also been recognised by the Turkish authorities, and the wetland is partly protected as a Ramsar Site, Game Reserve and First and Second Degree Protection Area.

Despite the strong legal conservation status, the wetland is being continuously destroyed, mostly due to the rapid growth of the city of Izmir, situated at the south-eastern corner of the delta. This happens because local stakeholders are not aware of the importance of the wetland and therefore do not support conservation measures. A large area of marshland has already been reclaimed for development of apartment blocks and industrial units. Other threats to the birds of the delta include the planting of eucalyptus trees, agricultural pesticides entering the water system and loss of freshwater habitats due to increasing salinity of water systems. It is important to halt and, if possible, reverse the effects of these problems.

Two years ago the RSPB has supported a complete survey of the delta bird populations. This produced valuable new data, which showed that some important mud-islands and the course of the old river bed should also be included in the protected area due to their importance for breeding birds.

When developers lobbied to downgrade some areas in the protected area, Doğa Derneği (DD), the RSPB, and other conservation groups started an aggressive campaign to secure the area's protected status. This resulted in a great deal of attention being given to the site at a national level. Finally, the Izmir Governor established a committee that is analysing all development and conservation issues in the delta area, with RSPB and DD contributing actively to the decisions taken. The area offers a huge potential for sustainable recreation and bird-watching activities, due to its proximity to a metropolis of several million inhabitants. DD and RSPB staff are now developing an Interpretation and Promotion Plan for the delta, with funding from the Izmir Governor.

For more information contact **Gökmen Yalçın**, *Policy and Advocacy Officer*, DD, email: gokmen@kustr.org or **Jose Tavares**, *Country Programmes Officer*, RSPB, email: jose.tavares@rspb.org.uk.

10 Turkish birdwatching community network in rise

Doğa Derneği (DD/BirdLife Turkey) has been carrying out a very successful capacity building project aiming at developing the network of Turkish birdwatching community, called "Development of the IBA Caretaker Network". As a result, the number of birdwatchers in the country has increased from 10 in the 1980s to 450 in 2003. Currently there are more than 15 birdwatching clubs in 12 provinces and they are increasing by day. Most of these local groups have undertaken good monitoring work for local, national or even international projects, such as the White-headed Duck Monitoring Project, the Great Bustard Conservation Project, and the International Waterfowl Census.

Building on the success of this initiative, DD and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) are now developing this interest into a coordinated, conservation-oriented countrywide network, working co-operatively to collect data on local species, sites and threats. Hence, together with experts from BirdLife International and the RSPB, DD has developed a 10-year project named "KuşAtlası, *Building the capacity*

to conserve Turkey's birds and biodiversity". This Project will continue the work towards increasing the awareness on birds and birdwatching in Turkey, by further developing and training the Turkish birdwatching network; and prepare the national breeding Bird Atlas.

Last year DD started local atlases in 7 cities where a capable bird club existed. In early Spring a relevant training programme was held, and atlas fieldwork was carried out until the end of June by dedicated members of 7 birdwatching clubs throughout Turkey. This year fieldwork is currently underway to census several more areas around the country.

For more information contact **Gökmen Yalçın**, *Policy and Advocacy Officer*, DD, email: gokmen@kustr.org or **Jose Tavares**, *Country Programmes Officer*, RSPB, email: jose.tavares@rspb.org.uk.

11 Discover the Green Gold in FYR of Macedonia

During the year 2004, National Park Mavrovo in FYR of Macedonia is a focal site of the implementation of the large campaign for nature protection, which is lead by the slogan "Discover the Green Gold-National Parks". The campaign was launched as part of the project "Strengthening the Capacities of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MoEPP)", which was initiated in 2003 by the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) and funded by the European Union (EU).

The National Park Mavrovo, the largest protected area in the country, hosted the first conference of its kind in the Republic of Macedonia "Development of Alternative Types of Tourism in Macedonia/Ecotourism" in May this year. It was also an opportunity to open the first Information Point in Mavrovo. Apart from these activities, several cultural events took place in March, such as a concert "The Nature of Music", and a photographic exhibition showing the beauties of the Park.

The campaign will continue next year bringing new interesting happenings to the National Park Pelister.

For further information contact **Sasko Jordanov**, *Adviser of the Division of Special Natural Heritage Protection Department*, MoEPP, email: S.Jordanov@moepp.gov.mk.

12 Biodiversity and needs assessment in Macedonia

The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MoEPP) of the FYR of Macedonia started a project "Activities Related to Biodiversity and Needs Assessment" in 2003. Several important documents were prepared within the frames of this project. The Study on the State of Biodiversity in the Republic of Macedonia represents the first national report of the country submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). This year, the MoEPP also finalised the Biodiversity Strategy with Action Plan, containing the most important measures for the protection of wild flora, fungi and fauna for the period until 2008. Several other publications were published as part of this project.

At the moment, MoEPP is in charge of establishing a clearing-house mechanism, which involves development of a biodiversity related web portal. The last phase of the project anticipates realization of a Public Awareness Raising Campaign on Biodiversity Protection and Conservation.

For further information contact **Sasko Jordanov**, *Adviser of the Division of Special Natural Heritage Protection Department*, MoEPP, email: S.Jordanov@moepp.gov.mk.

13 London University guides the way for BiH tourism

London Metropolitan University has been working with 23 dynamic post-graduate trainees drawn from all communities and corners of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), with the objective of demonstrating and building upon the real potential for tourism in BiH. Once the trainees have graduated from London Metropolitan later in 2004 with an MA in tourism and cultural institutions, they will form the core of expertise that will develop the sector and allow BiH successfully to compete on the European stage. One of the key effects of the project and its networks, has been to build up an interest to participate and invest in a sustainable style of tourism. That is one that incorporates the importance of social, cultural and environmental parameters and not just pure economic growth. We believe that this is a model for similar projects in the tourism and cultural industries sector in other post-conflict and transitional economies and societies.

Funded by the European Commission, over three years this University based TEMPUS project has produced a substantive capacity building programme for tourism development. Coordinated from London

Metropolitan University, the project consists of an international consortium of inter-disciplinary partners such as the University of Sarajevo, the University of Banja Luka, Republika Srpska Ministry of Trade and Tourism, Federation of BiH Ministry of Trade and Tourism, OSCE Mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and others, covering the diverse facets of the modern tourism industry and encouraging cooperation across entities.

A significant feature of this training course has been the locating of any ideas on BiH tourism development firmly within the framework of a regional context. So for instance the trainees have had the opportunity to visit borderland areas such as Sutjeska National Park, and Trebinje and its hinterland. In those locations we have considered how ecosystems, tourism itineraries and lines of infrastructure are all unrestrained by political boundaries, and all mutually benefit from closer cross-border collaboration.

Key achievements within the lifecycle of the project include: training of trainers, delivery of pilot workshops/seminars to a wider audience thus laying the groundwork for a sustainable training programme, development of a draft strategic policy document for tourism, and creation of BiH TEMPUS tourism association.

For further information about this project contact London Metropolitan University: **Tom Selwyn**, email: t.selwyn@londonmet.ac.uk, or **Jonathan Karkut**, email: j.karkut@londonmet.ac.uk.

14 Balkan Peace Park project in Prokletije mountains

The Prokletije Mountain range is the largest individual mountain chain in the Dinaric region, hosting diverse and numerous flora and fauna species. For example, 255 endemic plant species and sub-species can be found in Prokletije, while more than 200 bird species make the mountain one of the most significant ornithological areas in the Balkans and Europe. The mountain was declared as an Important Bird Area in 2000. Due to its physical and geo-political characteristics, the area has remained relatively undeveloped, inaccessible and sparsely inhabited, and its environment well preserved.

Such natural assets were the reason why the Institute for Nature Protection of Serbia proposed in 1999 declaration of Prokletije as a National Park, which has not been endorsed due to a complex political situation. The mountain straddles Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo/a, and according to the UN, a part of it is within the Republic of Serbia's territory. The area became one of the focal places of interest of an international group of experts who initiated a project Prokletije – International Peace Park, thus unifying this special wilderness region.

This is one of the projects within the Balkan Peace Park initiative, established and developed by the UK based group of experts. Focusing on Prokletije, the group formed a Committee in the year 2000, starting to promote research within the region itself as well as global interest, environmental education and resource mobilization through local initiatives, exchange visits, conferences, student internships, international site tours (including walking and mountain-bike treks), exhibitions, newsletters, lectures, video and photography. A website giving further details of the Peace Park will be launched in the near future.

Further information is available from **Antonia Young**, email: ayoung@mail.colgate.edu.

15 IUCN WCPA to establish a Global Network on Transboundary Protected Areas

La Maddalena, Sardinia: In May 2004, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) transboundary specialists met to discuss future actions needed in the establishment and management of transboundary protected areas (TBPA). The meeting was held as a follow up to the development of broad range of ideas outlined during the IUCN Vth World Parks Congress held in Durban, South Africa, last year. The experts in La Maddalena agreed it is necessary to establish a Global Transboundary Network that will consist of individuals and organisations actively involved in this field. The Network will serve as an extensive source of information and exchange of experiences on a global scale.

Due to its geo-political features, South-Eastern Europe is one of the most relevant regions worldwide for establishment of TBPAs. IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe (SEE) is actively working on enhancement of transboundary cooperation throughout the region, recognising it as a necessity for efficient conservation planning and effective protected area management. The interest for transboundary cooperation in the region is growing, as it is the case with the establishment of TBPAs on a global scale. It is worthwhile noting that the number of TBPAs in the world doubled since 1990!

There is no unique prescription on how to manage TBPA's as each of them is characterised by its own set of circumstances and socio-political, historical and environmental features. However, in many cases, successes in management of protected areas depend on joint efforts and transborder cooperation. By recognising challenges and needs for transboundary cooperation in protected areas, it is hoped that the future Global Transboundary Network will provide valuable knowledge for incorporation of best practices.

Up to date information about the Global Transboundary Network can be found on www.tbpa.net. For further information contact **Trevor Sandwith**, *Leader of IUCN WCPA Transboundary Protected Area Task Force*, email: trevor@capeaction.org.za.

16 Countdown 2010 initiative warmly welcomed by all EU Environment Ministers



Brussels, 6 July: The European Council of Environmental Ministers "WELCOMES the Countdown 2010 initiative, launched by a partnership of civil organisations, including the Irish Presidency, the Commissioner for the Environment, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and other key actors at the Malahide Conference, as an important sensitising initiative to the significance of biodiversity loss across the globe and as a means to act as an independent monitor of progress towards the 2010

targets and ENCOURAGES Member States, Commission and civil society to support the Countdown 2010 initiative".

With this statement, the Council, which is the main decision body of the European Union, formally endorsed the IUCN-inspired Countdown 2010 initiative to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010. This initiative was launched earlier this year at the European Biodiversity Stakeholders Conference in Malahide, Ireland.

Full text of the Council's statement is at <http://ue.eu.int/showPage.asp?lang=en>. For more information about the Countdown 2010 please visit www.countdown2010.net or contact **Rebecca Wardle**, *IUCN RofE Communications Officer*, tel: +32 2739 3008, email: rofe.communications@iucn.org.

17 New vacancy in IUCN SEE office

Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro: IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe (SEE) in Belgrade is looking for an Administrative and Finance Assistant, to work on a full-time basis. The candidate should have excellent organisational skills and relevant experience in working with budgets and accounting. We are looking for a fluent English speaking person with knowledge of Serbian and/or other SEE language who would be motivated to work with a small multi-cultural team. Deadline for receiving applications is 31 August 2004. For full vacancy announcement and more information contact **Maja Zitkovic**, *Project Officer*, IUCN SEE, email: maja.zitkovic@iucn.org.

Events

1 OPTIMA meeting in Belgrade

Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 5-11 September: The XI Organization for the Phyto-Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area (OPTIMA) meeting will be organized by the Natural History Museum in Belgrade in September. The scientific programme includes 12 symposia with invited speakers, and two poster sessions. Post-congress excursions are planned from September 12 to 15.

Further information is available at the conference website www.optima2004.org.

2 Montenegro hosting the Symposium of Ecologists

Tivat, Serbia and Montenegro, 14-18 October: The First Symposium of Ecologists of the Republic of Montenegro, with international participation will be organised by the Department of Biology, University of Montenegro, the Institute for the Protection of Nature of Montenegro, The Natural History Museum of Montenegro, and the Institute for Marine Biology, University of Montenegro, in Tivat in October.

The topics will include terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, conservation of biodiversity and geodiversity, agroecology, ecology of populations and biocoenology, ecological monitoring, pollution and protection of the environment, ecological education, and public participation and NGOs.

Further information is available at <http://www.biodiversity.cg.yu> or contact **Vladimir Pesic**, *Assistant Professor on Ecology of Animals*, University of Montenegro, email: pesicv@cg.yu.

3 MEFEST invites you to send documentaries on nature

Fruska Gora, Serbia and Montenegro, 16-19 September: This year, the international film festival, MEFEST, will take place in Fruska Gora National Park in September. For the past eleven years MEFEST has contributed to raising public awareness about environmental issues, and also to promoting sustainable tourism and sports, through over 950 documentary films from 50 countries shown at this festival. The organisers are inviting documentary filmmakers to submit their work related to environment, tourism or sport. For more details contact **Gavro Azinovic**, *Director of MEFEST*, email: slavicagrubac@hotmail.com.

4 The International Symposium on Society and Resource Management

Östersund, Sweden: The International Symposium on Society and Resource Management (ISSRM) will be held in Östersund from 16-19 June 2005. The main theme of this symposium is "From Knowledge to Management – Balancing Resource Extraction, Protection and Experiences", and it will include topics such as nature-based tourism, rural impact from tourism, strategic environmental assessment, mountain resource management, resource economics and valuation, parks and protected areas, multiple of forest land, policy, planning and conservation and many others. With focus on social and cultural dimensions of natural resource issues, this four-day conference will gather scientists from around the world, as well as resource management agencies. Deadline for registering is 28 February 2005, while scientific paper abstracts are due 31 January 2005.

For more information visit the ISSRM website <http://www.issrm2005.com>.

5 EUROPARC 2004 Annual Conference and General Assembly

Roses, Spain, 29 September-3 October: EUROPARC Annual Conference and General Assembly with the theme "The Challenge of Natura 2000: Conservation and Opportunities for People", will this year take place in the Catalonian coastal town Roses, which is surrounded by numerous protected areas. Field visits will be organised during the conference, while there will be five working groups:

1. Assessment, monitoring, and reporting on the conservation status of Natura 2000 sites
2. Managing Natura 2000 in the wider landscape
3. New approaches to financing Natura 2000
4. Challenges of managing coastal and marine ecosystems
5. Opportunities that Natura 2000 offer to local communities

For more information visit www.europarc2004.net.

6 BALWOIS 2004

Ohrid, FYR of Macedonia, 25-29 May: Balkan Water Observation Information for System for Decision Support, or let us be short - BALWOIS 2004, took place in Ohrid this May. 270 participants from 35 countries attended the event and presented their work under following 8 topics: Climate and Environment, Hydrological Regimes and Water Balances, Droughts and Floods, Integrated Water Resources Management, Information Systems for Decision Support, Water Bodies Protection and Ecohydrology, Lakes, and Hydrological Modelling.

Positive feedback of the participants has resulted with an idea to broaden the scope of the BALWOIS 2005 as to bring together scientists, policy makers and producers, present the results of the main national and international programs in Balkan countries, and offer to the participants the opportunity to set up future projects - implying the cooperation of teams at international level - which could be submitted to funding agencies. Far-sighted ideas cover integration of biodiversity conservation issues in the BALWOIS topics.

More details related to the progress of the BALWOIS network activities are available on <http://www.balwois.net>.

7 IUCN SEE Office official opening



Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 14 June: The IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe officially opened its doors in Belgrade on 14 June. Around 120 guests joined the inaugural celebration for this new sub-regional office of the Regional Office for Europe (ROfE). Many of them were participants at the UNESCO-IUCN workshop that was held during that week in Belgrade and Tara National Park and which focused on transboundary cooperation in the region. Other invited guests included representatives from UNDP, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, FAO, EU Embassies, the Ministry of Science and Environment of Serbia, as well as the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia in whose premises the celebration took place.

8 South-Eastern Europe represented at CEPA Workshop in Spain

Valsain, Spain, 12-16 June: The expert workshop "Managing Change in Conservation and Sustainable Development" – The pivotal role of Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) in the Environmental Conventions was held in Valsain, Centre for Environmental Education – CENEAM, in Spain. The workshop was organised by the Ministry for the Environment of Spain, IUCN Regional Office for Europe (ROfE) and IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC).

The main themes of the workshop were the role of CEPA in implementation of the environmental conventions as well as in "Halt biodiversity loss by 2010" processes. The case studies related to the training programmes on education of local communities that were selected for the workshop, illustrated creative ways on involving people effectively in these processes and towards improved participatory management in nature conservation. Pre-workshop session, on Using Systems Thinking for Transformational Change, provided by Lead International Inc (LEAD), warmed up participants for further interactive sessions, professional exchange and discussions of best practices in Europe.

Entire workshop, and especially regional group meetings opened large opportunities for networking and discussing the ways to run and improve national and regional CEPA activities. Participants from Bulgaria, Greece, Slovenia and Serbia, as well as the Ramsar bureau representative, joined the South-Eastern European Regional Group meeting and exchanged professional experience and opinions about the needs and opportunities for organizing functional CEPA networks which would consist of managers of protected areas, governmental and nongovernmental organisations on the national level. This group also discussed opportunities for improving mutual communication in the region.

For more information contact **Natasa Panic**, *Communications Officer*, Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia: natasa@natureprotection.org.yu or **Violeta Orlovic**, E-team: violeta_o@yahoo.com.

9 Danube Day Celebration



Galati, Romania, 29 June: Thousands of citizens joined the celebration of the International Danube Day, launched by the Eco-Counselling Centre-Galati (ECCG), and opened by the UNDP Ambassador to Bucharet, Soknan Han Jung. The 29 June was a day of festivities, which began with a photographic exhibition "Water World" and included various social and cultural events such as presenting awards to the winners of the "Be a Danube Artist" national school competition. ECCG, city and national officials and invitees gathered for the opening seminar which focused on Danube River and the importance of

cooperation with surrounding basin countries in conservation of the river ecosystem. Another seminar on "International NGO Partnerships" was held during the same day. ECCG hopes that this year's Danube Day event will become traditional for many generations to come. We all live downstream! The Danube River is our common asset! Let's protect it!

For more information on Danube Day contact **Mihaela Radef**, ECCG, email: eco@cceg.ro.

Funding opportunities

1 **Call for Proposals: LIFE 2005 LIFE III Third Countries - LIFE III Nature - LIFE III Environment**

Regions: 25 EU Member States, Albania, Algeria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, the West Bank and Gaza, and the Baltic shoreline of Russia

Priorities and financed activities: This covers 3 usual strands under LIFE III plus a new pilot action

Amount awarded per project: According to projects

Closing date: 15 October 2011

Background information: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/home.htm>

Contact: Bruno Julien, life-environment@cec.eu.int

2 **Call for Proposals: Specific measures in support of international cooperation 1 Specific Support Actions (SSA) for associated/candidate states - FP6**

Regions: EU countries, Associated Candidate countries: Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey

Reference: FP6-2004-ACC-SSA-2

Priorities and financed activities: This call falls under the first block of activities "Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area".

Global budget: 19,8 Million Euros

Amount awarded per project: between 35 and 100% of global project costs

Closing date: 14 October 2004

Background information: http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=146

Contact: Inco Information Desk, inco@cec.eu.int

3 **Call for proposals: FP6 - 1 Specific measures in support of international cooperation 2 INTAS – Research activities: Summer School Support, Infrastructure actions, Strategic scientific workshops**

Regions: EU (15+10), Candidate countries, EFTA countries, Israel, New Independent States

Amount awarded per project: Depending on the projects (a grant will not exceed 25 000 Euros)

Closing date: 31 October 2004

Submission of proposals: <http://www.intas.be/calls/calls.aspx>

Contact: Joelle Lepot, joelle.lepot@intas.be

4 **Call for proposals: Framework programme for research and development Sustainable development, global change and ecosystems – FP6 – 1- 6.3**

Regions: EU Member States, Associated States (EEA), Associated candidate countries

Priorities and financed activities: This call fall under the first block of thematic programmes under: "Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area"

Global budget: 205 millions euros

Amount awarded per project: between 35 and 100% of global project costs

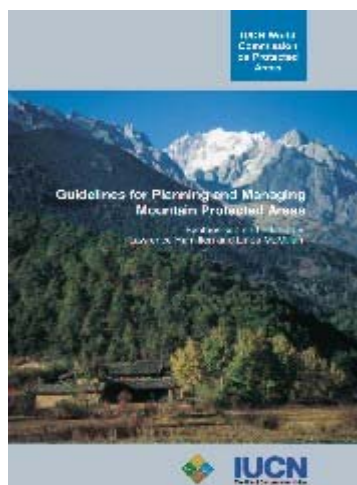
Closing date: 26 October 2004

Background information: http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=133
<http://www.cordis.lu/sustdev/environment/home.html>

Contact: Global change and Ecosystems, rtd-sustainable@cec.eu.int

Publications

1 IUCN WCPA new guidance on conservation of mountains



"Mountains are very special places. For many they are sacred; to most they bring an uplifting of the spirit and refreshment; to a few, they bring fear." These are the words from the newly published IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) "Guidelines for Planning and Managing Mountain Protected Areas". This manual, co-authored by Lawrence Hamilton and Linda McMillan, provides recommendations for establishing and managing new protected areas in the mountain environment. Through elaborating on issues such as water and soil conservation, interpretation, climate change, tourism, local communities and conservation of spiritual and cultural values, this publication intends to provide the framework for developing more specific guidelines at the national and site levels.

The guideline can be downloaded at IUCN website <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/pubs/pdfs/mountainPAguide-screen.pdf>.

For more information on IUCN WCPA Mountains Theme Programme visit the website <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/biome/mountain/mountain.html>.

2 Guideline on Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation

Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation is the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) guideline, co-authored by Trevor Sandwith, Clare Shine, Lawrence Hamilton, David Sheppard and Adrian Phillips. It was published in 2001 as part of the WCPA Best Practice Protected Areas Series Guidelines and it gives guidance on how to achieve peace through protected areas. It also aims to facilitate transboundary cooperation between protected areas. The preparation of this Guideline was a result of WCPA's decision to focus more attention on conservation and security issues related to transboundary protected areas. The Guideline was also basing on the outcomes of several specialist meetings which were held in Cape Town (The International Conference on Transboundary Protected Areas as a Vehicle for International Cooperation), Bormio (The International Symposium for Parks for Peace), and Gland (a follow up of Parks for Peace meeting: Promoting a Global Partnership) from 1997 to 2000.

The guideline is available at http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/pubs/pdfs/Transboundary_guide.pdf.

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.

ROfE in Belgrade

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Join the 3rd World Conservation Congress in Bangkok, Thailand on 17-25 November!
For more information visit <http://www.iucn.org/congress/index.cfm>