

Capacity building for governments on their new nature conservation engagements arising from the EU accession

In August 2004 CEEWEB started a new national project supported by the European Union's Phare Access program for informing people about the establishment of the Natura 2000 Network in Hungary. This project fits into the Natura 2000 information strategy of the Hungarian Government.

Local governments play essential role in the practical implementation of the Aquis Communautaire. Involvement and informing of local people is legally required by the Aarhus Convention, furthermore the positive attitude of inhabitants and the integration of the nature conservation goals in different sectors, planning and development have key importance in realizing the European Union's nature conservation strategy. The local governments have active everyday contact with the inhabitants and they are responsible for many planning, development and authorizing procedure, which can affect the nature, especially the Natura 2000 network. Therefore it is very important that the local governments staff is well informed and aware of nature conservation related regulations and community strategies. In this project we want to inform and strengthen the consciousness of two target group: the local governments and the inhabitants.

We organize training for local governmental employers in each region of Hungary. We organize a training of special thematic for local governments' environmental referents. Beside strengthening the knowledge of the governments we provide them information material to help their public information and public involvement activities.

We elaborate and deliver awareness raising publications for the two target groups. The calendar will keep the local governments staff's interest alive continuously, while the parallel campaigning through a poster series hung out in community buildings. A brochure about the most important information sources will be available at every municipality. This way the provided information will get to the wide public partly directly, partly through the local governments. This will stimulate the cooperation of governments and inhabitants and public participation. The project will help the better implementation of the Bird and Habitat Directives in Hungary.

The project will affect all the local governments in Hungary and the trainings 210 settlements of approximately 650 000 inhabitants altogether.