

Workshop on NGO participation in decision making on tourism development: Advocacy and campaigning

*Dobarsko and Govedartzi, Rila Mountains, Bulgaria
October 22 – 25, 2007*

Invitation

In many locations in Central and Eastern Europe, tourism development has clearly exceeded the carrying capacity and led to dramatic consequences for both, nature and people. However, good examples do exist, which show that tourism may indeed contribute to a harmonised co-existence of man and nature – if implemented in a sustainable manner.

NGOs have a role to play in both, advocating sustainable tourism and preventing those tourism activities that do not meet sustainable development criteria. Looking around in Central and Eastern Europe it becomes evident that NGOs do not tap their full potential in this field. The workshop of the CEEWEB Sustainable Tourism Working Group aims to strengthen NGOs in their activities. It wants particularly to achieve the following goals:

Main objectives of the workshop:

- Build capacity of NGOs in the field of sustainable tourism, campaigning and advocacy
- Share experiences among NGOs in CEE/SEE in running successful campaigns in the field of Sustainable Tourism
- Build a network of NGOs that will facilitate advocacy for sustainable tourism development across CEE/SEE
- Support Bulgarian NGOs in developing a campaigning plan for protecting Rila National Park from mass tourism development on its territory

Who should participate? The workshop will be useful for those NGO representatives that have experience in sustainable tourism development, but would like to acquire more skills and knowledge in the field of advocacy and campaigning. It will also be useful for activists, who need to get insight into sustainable tourism specifics when campaigning.



Flash Mob "For Rila", 29 August 2007, Sofia



The 'singing and dancing grannies' at Dobarsko



If Super Borovets project is implemented, a cable car will connect Markudjicite peak to Samokov town

The workshop will take place in Rila Mountains in Bulgaria. The participants should arrive to Sofia on Sunday, October 21st. From there, transport to Dobarsko village – the location of the first meeting days - will be organised. On October 23 the participants will have a field trip (meetings with national park administration, investors and local community). Afterwards, the meeting will be continued at Govedartzi village. After the closure of the meeting in the evening of October 25th the participants can leave to Sofia either on the same day in the evening, or next day. Transport will be organised. More information is provided in a Logistics Note, available from September 24.

Participation costs will be covered for selected participants. Tickets will be reimbursed upon arrival. Accommodation and meals will be provided for the participants.

Deadline for registration is September 30. The registration form is available at www.ceeweb.org/workinggroups/sustainabletourism/Meetings/2007_2/Reg_form_STWG_Rila.doc. Please check if you need visa to enter Bulgaria and if you do, inform us as early as possible, so that we can organise support. If the number of participants will exceed the places available, the participants will be selected based on their potential to apply the knowledge acquired at the workshop back in their organisations. The meeting will be conducted in English language; therefore conversational knowledge of English for participation in the workshop is a must.

Agenda of the meeting is available at http://www.ceeweb.org/workinggroups/sustainabletourism/Meetings/2007_2/preliminary_AGENDA_STWG_Rila.pdf.

For more information please contact Katarzyna Ososinska, CEEWEB, by e-mail kasia@ceeweb.org, tel. +36 1 398 0135; or Jordanka Dineva, Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation, by e-mail dan4e@gbg.bg, tel. +359 2 9316183.

We are looking forward to seeing you in Bulgaria!

What is CEEWEB?

CEEWEB is an international network of non-governmental organizations in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region. More than 70 NGOs from 17 countries are members of the network. The mission of CEEWEB is the conservation of the biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development. The Working Groups of CEEWEB are mission-oriented task forces set up and run by local nature conservation NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe, they are the essential driving forces of change on local and regional levels. For more information please check www.ceeweb.org.

CEEWEB Sustainable Tourism Working Group

The aim of the Working Group is to make tourism in Central and Eastern European countries sustainable. The members of the group strive towards the common goal through joint activities, like information exchange, promoting good practices, capacity building, policy-making, pilot projects and lobbying. Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development of the Convention on Biological Diversity are directing the work of the group.

Example of activities: Sustainable tourism development for Carpathian Countries

The CEEWEB Sustainable Tourism Working Group members participated in collecting best practice examples and case studies on negative tourism impacts in the Carpathian countries:

www.ceeweb.org/workinggroups/sustainabletourism/resources/ST_Opportunities_Carpathians_Bg_Doc_31-10-2006.pdf.

The document was presented to the participants of the Carpathian Convention Conference of Parties and helped to take a decision to developing a tourism strategy and protocol under the Convention. To support the implementation of the future strategy and share the experiences with other countries, the Working Group launched model projects of sustainable tourism development in Trascau Mountains in Romania and Djerdap National Park in Serbia, as well as Stranja Nature Park in Bulgaria.

Our understanding of sustainable tourism is summarised in this brochure:

www.ceeweb.org/workinggroups/sustainabletourism/resources/STWG_brochure/front.pdf

www.ceeweb.org/workinggroups/sustainabletourism/resources/STWG_brochure/map.pdf