CEEWEB GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Organized together with:
GREEN BALKANS
Federation of Nature Conservation NGOs

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Introduction

After the change of the political system in the former socialist countries the development of the environmental movement took very different courses.

Although the situation of the NGO movement is different from country to country, the problems they tackle are greatly similar. Some of these common issues are for example the accumulated environmental pollution, low environmental awareness of the public and the protection of the rich biological diversity.

Considering that the region has common environmental problems and values, it became evident for the environmental NGO movement in the CEE countries, that co-operation on international level promotes solving their national problems efficiently.

Deriving from the common past and the new common challenges (privatization, EU enlargement), there has been a few experiments in the past to initiate and create NGO networks in the region. Most of these initiatives vanished soon, mainly because of the lack of resources needed to manage the international network. As the governments of CEE countries do not consider the co-operation as important as the NGOs do, they are not keen to support such international initiatives.

Recently there have only been few initiatives that are still active in the region, with CEEWEB among them.

CEEWEB was founded in 1994 as the common will of environmental NGOs from 12 countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The overarching aim for the establishment of the CEEWEB network was to work on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in CEE countries, to get familiar with each others’ environmental activities, exchange ideas and experiences and to start working on joint projects. These projects are to focus on concrete nature conservation and lobby activities, raising public awareness, and tackling cross-border nature conservation issues and policies.

Later it became obvious, that the greatest challenge for the conservation of biological diversity in these countries is related to the EU enlargement. During the accession negotiations the environmental and particularly the nature conservation issues are often neglected – protection of natural values are considered to be adequately taken care of by the applicant countries themselves. The concern of the NGOs is that natural values might fall victims to the enforced social and economic development. The first signs can be already observed, as the strive for economic growth in the accession countries marginalises nature conservation. The lack or low degree of environmental awareness provides the feasibility and social acceptance.

Tackling this issue calls again for the empowerment of a truly Central and East European NGO network. Therefore CEEWEB is focusing more on analyzing and understanding the consequences of the EU accession.

Within these activities CEEWEB deals with the EU Environmental Policy, the related Biodiversity Strategy and the Birds and Habitats Directives analyzing the consequences of their transposition and implementation. CEEWEB also helps its member organisations to scrutinize the national environmental policies with regards to the EU accession.

Pursuing its mission CEEWEB has developed co-operation with EEB, IUCN and WWF. CEEWEB strongly counts on the continuation of this co-operation.
Planned activities

Realizing and understanding the recent threats to natural values, the Annual Meeting (October, 2001) of CEEWEB has decided that the network should concentrate efforts on four main program areas. The Headquarters have the mandate to secure finances for this work and ensure the proper implementation of the projects.

1. Building bridges to Brussels

It is a common interest of the EU member states as well as the accession countries to protect the biological heritage of Central and Eastern Europe. In order to achieve this, the co-operation between EU and non-EU NGOs is similarly important. This work does not only entail project work, but also the preparation of common statements, position papers and lobby activities. Realizing this CEEWEB is increasingly taking part in Pan-European initiatives.

a) Networking

EU-NGO Dialogue

CEEWEB is taking part in the work of the EU-NGO Dialogue Group. The Dialogue aims at creating a communication platform on which the NGOs and EU representatives can exchange views, ideas and concerns regarding the environmental aspects of the EU accession process. An important part of the Dialogue process is the regular updating on the ‘state of play’ of the accession preparations by the applicant countries. The Dialogue Group is regularly revising the accession agenda, and discusses related concerns with representatives of various DG’s.

Within this work CEEWEB represents the Biodiversity concerns. CEEWEB is actively taking part in the development of the meetings’ agendas, and the results of the discussions are shared with the network.

CEEWEB is intended to continue its work in the Dialogue Group in 2003, involve its members in the agenda setting and disseminate the results of the preparatory meetings (NGOs) and of the meetings in Brussels with representatives of the Administration.

EEB Biodiversity Working Group

The European Environmental Bureau is one of the leading NGOs based in Brussels to represent and lobby for the interest of its constituting member organizations in the EU administration.

The Biodiversity Working Group of EEB was established in 2001 and CEEWEB is one of the founder members of the group. The Working Group contributes to the work of the European Habitat Forum and deals with specific topics, such as complaints procedures, implementation of the Habitats Directive, assessing and commenting on the policy documents of the Commission and of the European Parliament. Presently CEEWEB has been elected as chair of the Working Group. CEEWEB is setting the agendas of the meetings, prepares the meeting minutes, and ensures that the WG is following its work programme. CEEWEB makes efforts utilizing the expertise of its member organizations to provide the most effective assistance to the work of the
Biodiversity Working Group. What is more, CEEWEB works beyond its network to draw other groups in the activities of EEB as well. Those organizations that are working on nature protection issues, but not affiliated to the big nature conservation NGOs (IUCN, WWF, etc.) can now become member of EEB and join the work of the Biodiversity Working Group.

The Working Group has the potential – by being part of the EEB system, which tackles different policy issues (transport, agriculture, water, etc.) – to pursue truly policy integration questions. Through the participation of CEE NGOs the EEB Working Group will increase its political influence in Brussels.

**East-European Coordination Platform**

Member organizations of CEEWEB are all working on nature conservation issues. The Annual Meeting (2001) recognized the need and created the momentum so that these NGOs and their activities will be represented on the EU level. Therefore CEEWEB has joined the European Habitat Forum (EHF) in which the coordination platform for NGO networks is greatly working on Habitats Directive related issues. With the joining of CEEWEB to this platform in 2002, the first purely CEE based NGO network will contribute to the work of the EHF. This will be the opportunity for many small, CEE NGOs to enter EU activities.

CEEWEB will host the next meeting of the EHF in Hungary, which is tentatively scheduled to take place in autumn 2003. This meeting will pay special attention on Natura 2000 questions in accession countries, and the meeting itself will be more accessible for NGOs from the CEE region.

Moreover, CEEWEB has established a coordination platform for its network, which coordinates nature conservation policy work among the members. The results of these activities are channelled to the EHF, but CEEWEB is also stepping up with its independent opinions and statements in Brussels.

The progress of the work will be reported in a bi-monthly newsletter, which will be circulated among the members of the CEEWEB network, but it will also be available for the broader public through the CEEWEB website. This work began in October 2002, and will continue in 2003.

**Lobbying for Natura 2000**

CEEWEB now will start stronger lobby for Natura 2000 in Brussels and also in Hungary, to integrate Natura 2000 into sectoral policies, e.g. National Agricultural and Rural Development Plan, National Agro-environmental Plan, National Development Plan. We plan to prepare suggestions and position papers towards the governments, to communicate goals and benefits of the Natura 2000 process to the public and to convince municipalities to lobby for and not against Natura 2000 nomination of their lands.

In many regions of the highest biological diversity industrial and agricultural development is not possible; therefore tourism is the biggest threatening factor. Thus we plan to work also on issues related to the impacts of tourism development on the implementation of the Habitats Directive and lobby for the implementation of sustainable tourism strategies in the CEE countries with the help of the members of the CEEWEB network and other European NGOs.
b) **Practical Projects**

**Best and worst practices of Natura 2000 implementation**

In this project CEEWEB has worked out a methodology on how to evaluate the implementation and effect of the Habitats Directive. This methodology has been focusing mainly on biodiversity protection, but also other aspects has been taken into consideration, like delineation, maintenance, the social and as well as the economic needs of the population in the areas and their direct involvement in the management.

After the methodology is set, it will be used to evaluate concrete Natura 2000 sites. This pilot project has been implemented by using the German examples for Hungary’s efforts, thus the concrete examples can be adopted in the Hungarian conservation practice and examine failures that occurred in Germany but could be avoided in Hungary.

When the Hungarian version of the document is completed, the results, but more importantly the assessment methodology will be translated into English and will be used within the CEEWEB network to carry out similar assessment in all accession countries. This exercise forms part of the CEEWEB Work Program for 2003. The aim is to prepare a publication about the results of this work for the officials of local governments in the potential Natura 2000 areas and for conservation specialists of the Habitats Directive as well as for nature conservation NGOs.

**Natura 2000 Barometer**

WWF has initiated an exercise called ‘The Natura 2000 Barometer’ which should monitor the preparation of the implementation of the Habitats Directive in the accession countries. CEEWEB has formally agreed with WWF to join forces for this project and insure data flow from those countries in which WWF has no national office or affiliated NGOs, but CEEWEB does. This project is the first one of a series of three consecutive exercises.

The objective of the work is to have an overview of the ‘state of play’ in preparation for the establishment of Natura 2000 in each country, identifying good initiatives and the main difficulties as well as proposing measures to address them.

Based on the received answers, WWF European Policy Office with the assistance of CEEWEB will compile a twenty-page report with key recommendations appropriate both at national and European levels. This report will be the first one in a series of three and it will be used as a reference point to assess progress until the transmission of the official lists of proposed Sites of Community Interest (pSCI) to the European Commission at the beginning of 2004. The publication of the second report is due to come out in April 2003 and the third in early 2004.

**Impacts of different regulations and developments on the biodiversity – comprehensive studies**

Habitats Directive is the most important legal instrument of the Community to safeguard nature. The success of the Habitats Directive depends highly upon that how can we enforce integrating biodiversity aspects in sectoral and development policies. With the legal harmonization required for the EU accession, community policies and regulations will determinate the direction of development not only in EU member states but also in the CEE countries. Some of these regulations and policies have big influence on the formulating Natura 2000 network. CEEWEB plans to carry out comprehensive research covering the EU and the CEE regions on two subjects:
- Threats of infrastructure development policies and plans – especially the Trans European Transport Network - on the Natura 2000 sites
- Effects of EU and national standards, agricultural practices and consumption patterns on genetic and species diversity of agricultural products

CEEWEB is making analysis on the European infrastructure development plans and policies, the agricultural practices and the standardization of agricultural products and how they influence the biological diversity and the protection of Natura 2000 sites. Based on the results CEEWEB – with the assistance of the cooperating partners – will compile a scientific background paper to support lobbying for integration of biodiversity interests in other policies. The research will start in 2003 and the studies will be published in 2004.

**Integrated evaluation of regional development plans and strategies according to their contribution to sustainable development**

Within this project CEEWEB investigates the possible effects on Biodiversity and the possible contribution to sustainable development of the SAPARD and ISPA programmes among others. Model areas are selected in the northeast part of Hungary and along with a designed assessment methodology the effects of regional and rural development strategies will be evaluated. The work, both the methodology and assessment will be published.

The project investigates how biodiversity concerns are considered in different policy areas (Transport, Agriculture, Industry and Tourism), following the recommendations of the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

The developed methodology can be used by NGOs as well as professional planners to evaluate regional and rural development plans with regards to their possible effects on biological diversity and their contribution to sustainable development. The documents (assessment and methodology) will be translated into English, and will be published in hard copy and in a digital form. At a later stage a training course will be organized for members NGOs of the CEEWEB network on using the assessment methodology and with the intention of creating a ‘Sustainable development – rural development’ working group to monitor the design and implementation of regional, rural development plans in the accession countries.

**Sustainable tourism: examples of good practices and lessons learned**

Understanding that intensive tourism developments can endanger the existing natural values of the regions lagging behind, CEEWEB started to participate in such development planning processes. The project will offer input for planning and implementing tourism development strategies in the CEE countries based upon the experiments in the EU, where ecological tourism is more developed. One of the aims of the project is to present positive practices, which contributed to the successful management of natural values and integration of development and nature conservation interests. Another purpose of the project is to help CEE countries to avoid pitfalls when developing areas maintaining high biological diversity, by providing analyzed information on the threats of tourism investments, the conflicts and the possible solutions.

The data collection through questionnaires and interviews will be based upon existing contacts with experts (both governmental and non-governmental) from EU member states The
collected data will be analyzed and discussed in the CEEWEB’s Sustainable Tourism Working Group, should the General Assembly decide to create such a working group\(^1\).  

2. International processes  

a) European Processes  

‘Environment for Europe’ process  

Since the Aarhus meeting in 1998, CEEWEB is following closely the process. Now the Network started the preparation for the upcoming Kiev Conference. Together with partner networks covering the NIS countries and EU member states CEEWEB is planning to prepare an evaluation of the existing international obligations for nature conservation (conventions, declarations), their effects and stakeholder involvement in their implementation. The final work will be an assessment document describing the overall picture of the whole continent regarding the effect and effectiveness of these international treaties.  

Based on the research, CEEWEB will make an input on the Conference, bringing the NGOs concerns to the intention of the governmental delegates. Moreover, CEEWEB wants to ensure that NGOs and stakeholders in general will play a more active role in the European processes as it is precedent until now.  

The 5\(^{th}\) EfE Ministerial Conference, which is to be held in Kiev, Ukraine (21-23 May 2003), is the following important milestone in this process. It will focus on the possible common solutions for strengthening the environmental pillar of sustainable development in the region, providing environmental security and building new partnerships among all stakeholders.  

Non-governmental organizations have taken part in the process from the very beginning (1991). An ad hoc Pan-European Coalition of environmental NGOs (it later changed into the Pan-European ECO-Forum) was established in 1991 to facilitate the contribution of NGOs to the EfE process.  

“Road to Kiev”  

During the EfE process a large number of conventions, strategies and policies aiming at nature conservation have been developed. Numerous CEE countries adopted and / or ratified most of them, and started to work on their implementation. Despite all these efforts, it seems that the state of nature has not improved significantly. The Kiev conference will provide an excellent opportunity to make an NGO survey in a great number CEE country considering the implementation of these international treaties. The project will result in elaboration of case studies from various countries that demonstrate how the ‘Environment for Europe’ process and the ratification of international nature conservation policies have shaped national nature conservation activities, how this process is recently linked to the tasks of the accession to the European Union and how the process is developing in non-accession countries. The outcome will also identify the key achievements, problems, bottlenecks and the role of the NGOs in this process. On the basis of the case studies and prepared recommendations improvement of nature conservation policy will be further expanded in the region. These statements will also voice NGO commitment and outline methods of how the participating NGOs will monitor and report on the implementation of the ’Kiev’ results.  

\(^1\) Please find the proposed Work Program of the Tourism WG attached.
b) **Global Processes**

**Global Environmental Facility**

The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) was established as one of the results of the Rio Summit, 1992. Its mission is to provide assistance in finding solutions for the problems of global nature conservation and environmental protection. CEEWEB is the Regional Focal Point for the GEF NGO Network since 1997. This structure is a network of NGOs working on the Global Environmental Facility on the policy level. In this work CEEWEB represents the CEE NGOs at GEF Council Meetings, being held twice a year. The practical work in the GEF NGO network is to facilitate information exchange between NGOs, GEF Secretariat and the GEF council. With the help of this work, CEE based NGOs can use CEEWEB as intermediary to articulate NGO positions, requests and demands.

The concrete work entails distribution background documents, organizing NGO input to the meetings, reporting back to the NGO community after meetings, securing NGO participation at training courses organized by GEF and other events.

CEEWEB attends the main decision making events of GEF, the bi-annual council meetings. Information from the Council Meetings is supplied to the interested NGOs. CEEWEB took part on the GEF Assembly in October 2002, and has reinforced its regional position in its present role.

**3. National activities and Pilot projects**

Beside the international activities to enhance biodiversity, CEEWEB takes efforts to protect the biodiversity on national level. Different kinds of activities are carried out by the Head Office in Miskolc, Hungary, which entails a great range of activities (habitat mapping, management and restoration plans, preparing educational materials, etc.)

As the language of these activities is Hungarian, the results of these pilot projects are translated into English, and thus made available for the whole Network. The purpose of these projects is to provide solid scientific base for future political lobby activities.

The following projects are being carried out in Hungary:
- Econet mapping in the buffer zone of Aggtelek National Park
- Reassessment of degradable habitats in central Sajó Valley
- Biodiversity training for the local governments’ decision makers

The implemented project itself and the developed training materials will form the base of implementing similar programs everywhere in the CEE region and thus contributing to the success of the Natura 2000 program.

- Participation in the Natura 2000 process

CEEWEB organises training for consultants with involvement of experts from Member States, to use their experience in Hungary, to learn how it happened in their country, what the main conflicts were during the process and how they could tackle them.

CEEWEB would like to extend the project to other CEE countries to share experiences in order to help to avoid the same faults and to learn good practices.
4. Servicing the Network

The Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting (AM) is the main decision making and planning instrument of the Network. The AM is open for all the members of the Network and for the representatives of those organizations which apply for membership. The AM also invites delegates of other environmental networks. At the Annual Meeting the streamlining of the activities, budget planning, election / confirmation of the officers, report of the Board / Secretary is performed.

The Annual Meeting confirms the status of the member organizations and approves new applicants as well. Furthermore, as the common thinking and planning are realized, cohesion between members is built and strengthened. This event is usually combined with a thematic workshop of topics highly relevant for the Network. The AM usually takes place in Budapest, Hungary, but this could be changed by involving network members to be the host of the upcoming meeting. The key issues for CEEWEB until the accession are the transposition and implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives, the 6th Environmental Action Programme, the integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies, cross-border protected areas and the evaluation of SAPARD and ISPA with regards to natural areas and cultural landscapes.

The key-questions of the Annual Meeting for 2003 are related to the consequences of EU enlargement and thus the preparation of CEEWEB’s response to these challenges.

Besides the decisions on the programme areas on which CEEWEB will work and the regular administrative matters will also be dealt with, as it is spelled out in the CEEWEB statutes. CEEWEB plans to confirm further cooperation with the big European networks and the increasing input of Central and East European NGOs to EU policies. The Annual Meeting of member organizations will identify the concrete activities, assign the financial means needed to implement the work program and agree on a certain timeframe for CEEWEB to work on these issues. These activities will open up new horizons for CEEWEB and through the CEEWEB network for the member NGOs to interact directly with the EU decision making systems.

Board Meetings

Between General Assemblies (every three year) the Advisory Board\(^2\) should meet at least three times a year, the last meeting to be connected to the Annual Meeting. The advisory Board will give guidance to the CEEWEB Headquarters with regards to network development and policy related matters.

Working Groups

Working Groups should be the implementing, expert arms of the Network. Working Groups should be formed following the recommendations of member organizations, and from them one should take the lead. Working Groups should submit a work program to the CEEWEB Headquarters, with a budget, and thus charge the Secretariat to ensure (co)financing for the planned activities. The overall coordination of the Working Groups will be done by the Secretariat.

\(^2\) To be elected by the General Assembly -2003.
The General Assembly will discuss one concrete proposal for establishing the “Sustainable Tourism” WG, and will consider the feasibility of others (Global Issues, EU Enlargement – Natura 2000, “Sustainable development – regional development”.

**Web-site**

CEEWEB has its website, which is regularly updated. Its purpose is also to host sites of member organizations, links to organizations, and reports of their activities. The Secretariat is encouraging member organizations to fully utilize the potential of the sites.

**Newsletter**

CEEWEB will publish a newsletter to its constituency with the aim of informing different stakeholders and groups of the society on the environmental consequences of the EU accession. They cover issues of this field not only in relation with the European Union and Member States, but also the accession countries, including Hungary. It will be distributed within the CEEWEB Network, both printed and digital forms. Besides the Network, it will be sent to groups having great influence on the society. This includes nature conservationists and environmental groups, other non-governmental organizations, trade unions and representatives of the business, local governments and their associations, officials from ministries, members of the National Environmental Council, environment related committees of the Parliament, scientists, educational institutions, information centres, libraries, media.

Articles of the Newsletter are based upon information from different institutions, via Internet or newsletters and on press releases of different organizations. We will also publish articles from government officials, experts of environment related fields, scientists and university professors, representatives of various stakeholders and the readers. The editorial board writes part of the articles about events, conferences and other important occasion, but also welcomes articles of member organizations and individuals.

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1. Establishment of a Working Group “Sustainable Tourism” with at least 10 members from CEE Countries under the roof of CEEWEB

The working group will base the activities on good practises and lessons learned from all over Europe, but especially from the European Union. Though as the group will use the Agenda 21 for Tourism and its guidelines from the European Commission, the concept of Natura 2000 and other instruments of the European Union, it will contribute to the enlargement process by educating and building the awareness of NGOs and other stakeholders in the CEE Countries. Through several workshops the group will discuss and distribute tools and information among NGOs.

2. Development of a common goal, objectives and tasks for the working group

The working group will function as a compiler and distributor of relevant information with regard to sustainable tourism and the protection of biological diversity. Therefore the group will compile good practises and lessons learned with regard to sustainable tourism development and management of other countries in Europe, by assistance of experienced organisations. Through several working meetings the group members will educate themselves, identify good practises, before distributing the results to the overall CEEWEB. As tourism is a cross-cutting issue and one component of sustainable use of ecosystems, the working group will contribute with its results to the overall concept of sustainable development. The running projects of the member organisations of CEEWEB will profit from the results of the working group, e.g. with regard to the management of tourism in protected areas.

3. Development of responsibilities and structures for the working group and in relation to the CEEWEB

At the first meeting of the working group the members will decide on a structure and responsibilities for the future work, consisting of a co-ordinator and leading organisations which have the ability and capacity for focussing on the described topics.

4. Compilation of examples of good practices and lessons learned from EU and CEE with regard to:
   a) management practices of sustainable tourism
   b) management practices of Natura 2000 sites
   c) National strategies and plans for (sustainable) tourism
   d) National Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plans (including CBD reporting)

The working group will develop programmes for enhancing the capacity of their members with special regard to the planning and management of tourism in vulnerable areas, such as protected areas and will give feedback to the overall CEEWEB. This will be based on the existing experiences of dealing with NATURA 2000 sites in the European Union and the data basis with regard to the International Guidelines for sustainable tourism in vulnerable ecosystems of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Further the working group results will contribute to the ongoing implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP) of each of the CEE Countries, with regard to the issue of managing tourism in vulnerable areas.

The working group will compile good practices and lessons learned of sustainable management of natural resources and waste related to tourism for the distribution among the members of CEEWEB and for giving advice to relevant projects and national strategies and plans in the CEE Countries. This will be based on examples such as EMAS, ISO, VISIT, VIABONO and others.

5. Compilation of existing legal frameworks for sustainable tourism and the conservation of biological diversity

The working group will compare existing legislation with regard to the protection of biological diversity and the management and planning of tourism. With this action the members will get fully aware about the current activities and status quo of their countries, for getting into action giving advice to the enhancement of the legal frameworks with regard to those issues, by lobbying and awareness campaigns.

6. Distribution of compilation results to the group members

As the working group will establish an internet homepage (connected to the homepage of CEEWEB), the interim and final results will be published frequently at this homepage. In addition the member organisations will continuously inform their members about the progress made. Finally during the project time the working group will meet at least four times to exchange their experiences and to compile the available information.

7. Discussion about potential strategies for the implementation of sustainable tourism in CEE

During the project time the working group will discuss how the overall strategy for sustainable tourism in the Central and Eastern European Countries should look like and they will discuss if there is a need to develop single, adjusted strategies for each of the countries, step by step. On the middle and long-term run the working group’s goal is to build the capacity of implementing organisations and NGOs in the field of sustainable tourism development, also in small regional projects. This should be done through regional workshops by the members of the working group.

8. Printing of information material with regard to sustainable tourism development and management and the conservation of biological diversity in the CEE Countries

Near to the end of the project the working group will select the most appropriate information, which should be distributed to decision makers at national and regional level, to the private sector and to relevant NGO of the Central and Eastern European Countries.

9. Establishment of a specific tourism internet homepage under CEEWEB, for the distribution of information and information exchange (news database platform) among NGO.

Among the compiled information from all over Europe, all member organization of the working group can include their available information about good practices in planning and management of sustainable tourism on the homepage, so that other organizations can learn from it and may join to the group. management of sustainable tourism on the homepage, so that other organizations can learn from it and may join to the group.
Changes in the CEEWEB HQS in 2002

A major change took place in September 2002, when the Policy Office was established in Budapest. Since then the staff grew to four/five in the Policy Office (as of 2003 April), which includes András Krolopp, the Secretary General who moved from the Miskolc Office to the Budapest Office, Klára Hajdu working full time, and Anna Iványi, Eszter Bokodi and Zsófia Tomcsányi working part-time on a contract basis. At the Miskolc Office the practical nature conservation and environmental education projects are run by Judit Sándor and Sándor Barati as before, and Edit Szász, the accountant also works for CEEWEB in the office.

CEEWEB was granted Core Funding for the operational costs in 2002 by the European Commission, and there is hope that the funding will be approved for 2003 as well.

Internet Site

CEEWEB hired the services of a web master in order to redesign and keep the website on a high level (www.ceeweb.org). We would also like to offer the opportunity for our members without their own homepage to publish some information and materials on the CEEWEB website.

Please find below our completed activities for the years 2002 and those extending beyond the last year. Some of our activities are of continuous nature and not linked to specific projects.

c) Completed Projects and Projects Extending Beyond 2002

International projects

Best and worst practices of Natura 2000 implementation
In this project CEEWEB worked out a methodology on how to evaluate the implementation and effects of the Habitats Directive. This methodology mainly focuses on biodiversity protection, but also other aspects, such as the social and the economic needs of the population in the designated areas and their direct involvement in the management are dealt with. Now, the concrete evaluation of practical examples is on the way - by using the German examples for Hungary’s efforts, thus the concrete examples can be adopted in the Hungarian conservation practice and failures can be examined that occurred in Germany but could be avoided in Hungary.

This project started in September 2002 and will be completed in June 2003, it is funded by the Hungarian Environmental Fund.

The Natura 2000 Barometer
WWF initiated the exercise ‘The Natura 2000 Barometer’, which aims to monitor the preparation of the implementation of the Habitats Directive in the accession countries. CEEWEB formally agreed with WWF to join forces for this project and ensure data flow from those countries, where WWF has no national office or affiliated NGOs, but CEEWEB does. This project is the first one of a series of three consecutive exercises. The objective of the work is to have an overview of the ‘state of play’ in the preparation for the establishment of Natura 2000 network in each country. It involves the identification of good initiatives and the main difficulties as well as the proposing of measures to accomplish or just on the contrary to avoid them.
The first report of the series of three is completed and available on the website of WWF (there is also a link to the report on the website of CEEWEB). The publication of the second report is due to come out in April 2003 and the third in early 2004.

'Environment for Europe' Process
CEEWEB was a co-organizer of the “Budapest Conference” preparatory meeting for Kiev in 2002 February and the NGO preparatory meeting held in Bratislava, 2002 December. CEEWEB prepared three projects ("International commitments in nature conservation“, “Evaluation of the PEBLDS” and “Safeguarding nature conservation in the National Development Plans”) in 2002 autumn as preparation for the Kiev Interministerial Conference held in May 2003: 9-13 CEE countries participate in these projects, which will end in June 2003. The projects are funded by the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Regional Environmental Center, the UNDP and the Swiss Ministry of Environment.

CEE Coordination Forum
CEEWEB started a project in September 2002 to create a coordination platform for NGOs in the CEE region. The platform provides opportunities not only for CEEWEB member NGOs, but also for those that are not members but working on EU nature conservation policy related issues. Within this work CEEWEB tries to collect views, statements and opinions from the region and feed them into the work of the European Habitats Forum, the Biodiversity Working Group of the European Environmental Bureau and the EU-NGO Dialogue. On the other hands CEEWEB provides the nature conservation NGOs in the CEE region with information on the work of these fora. There is regular reporting about the work progress on the website of CEEWEB, as well as electronic newsletters are produced.

National and local projects

Integrated evaluation of regional development plans and strategies with regards to sustainable development
This project aimed to work out a methodology, which can be used by NGOs to evaluate the possible effects of EU funded development schemes on biodiversity and sustainable development efforts. This methodology adopts a holistic, integrative approach and provides a tool to assess regional development concepts. The concrete outcome of the project is the manual comprising the research methodology, a theoretical study on the sustainability principles on which the methodology relies as well as a set of Hungarian case studies illustrating how the manual can be used in concrete cases. The report is written in Hungarian for its domestic use and translated to English (except for the Hungarian case studies). As a component of the project, a training course was held for about 30 Hungarian NGO representatives in October. The project is supported by the Phare Access 1 Initiative, it ended in 2003 March.

The development of a GIS system for the assistance of the decision-making in the northern unit of the Zemplén Protected Landscape Area
This project involves the analysis of maps and air photos on the northern unit of the Zemplén Protected Landscape Area (ZPLA) with the aim to compile a digital data base and a map series. This data base will contribute to the elaboration of the management plan of the ZPLA through the specific information it contains, and it will provide a sound basis for the long-term systematic monitoring and planning of economic, nature conservation and other activities in the area.

The analysis of land use changes on the Nagy-Kopasz hill at Tokaj, Hungary
This project includes the graphic presentation of land use changes on cadastral maps and their analysis, as well as the study of the ratio of traditional agricultural varieties and new grape varieties on
the Nagy-Kopasz hill at Tokaj. The objective is to provide additional information for the scientific background of the land management that aims to preserve our natural values.

The elaboration of management plans for protected meadows and pastures in the northern unit of the Zemplén Protected Landscape Area
The elaboration of management concepts and plans including processed factual and numeric data for the protected meadows and pastures in the northern unit of the Zemplén Protected Landscape Area (ZPLA). This project is an initial step in developing a system that maintains the habitats by fully respecting the nature conservation priorities with the involvement of the local farmers.

Habitat mapping in the buffer zone of Aggtelek National Park
This project is the continuation of habitat mapping in the buffer zone of Aggtelek National Park with the aim to contribute to the management of these areas. During the habitat mapping and the GIS data processing basic information can be gathered on the state of the buffer zone and the anthropogenic threats on the habitats, which can be utilised in the nature conservation work of the NP.

Controlling survey of environmentally threatened habitats in the central area of Sajó valley
The project includes the controlling survey of habitats that were already thoroughly surveyed in 1997. It aims to point out if the environmental investments of the industrial plants regarded as the main polluters in the region have brought positive changes that are also reflected in the state of these natural control areas. The arthropode fauna swiftly indicates the environmental changes, while knowing these changes helps the nature conservation activities.

Other, ongoing activities

Biodiversity Working Group of the EEB
CEEEWEB is full member of the European Environmental Bureau since the beginning of the year 2000. CEEWEB was among those organisations which initiated the establishment of the Biodiversity Working Group within EEB, and it is the only CEE based member of the WG until now. Since the spring of 2002 CEEWEB has been the chair of the WG, which was officially confirmed in September. In the course of the year 2002, the Working Group had 3 meetings (15.03.2002; 21.09.2002; 14.12.2002). Basic information, meeting agendas and minutes were circulated to CEEWEB network members, and were also published on the CEEWEB website and also disseminated in electronic newsletters.

European Habitats Forum
The EHF is an ad hoc committee created on the request of the European Commission. The leading objective of the forum is to represent the civil interests in the implementation of the Habitats Directive. Other working areas of EHF include the European Commission Biodiversity Action Plans, the Convention on Biological Diversity in Europe and the Bern Convention. CEEWEB was officially accepted as full member of EHF in the year 2002, and thus the first purely CEE based NGO network joined the EHF. CEEWEB attended the first meeting of the EHF, and presented the concerns of the CEE region. CEEWEB reported about the activities of the EHF and the results of its work to its members, and initiated the CEE Coordination Platform to enhance this cooperation in the region in September 2002.

EU-NGO Dialogue
Since 1999 the Directorate General Environment of the European Commission has been holding regular meetings with 40 environmental NGOs from the Candidate Countries, among them with CEEWEB. The Dialogue provides a platform for DG Environment and the NGOs to consult on new environmental policy developments in the European Union and their implications for the candidate
countries. At the same time the meetings also serve as good opportunities for NGOs to address their concerns to EU policy makers as well as to strengthen co-operation among the NGOs from participating countries.

CEEWEB is an active member of the Dialogue process since its beginning, it is the only NGO representing biodiversity concerns in the group. At the last meeting of the Dialogue Group, CEEWEB chaired the plenary meeting with Commissioner Ms. Margot Wallström. The results of the work of the Dialogue Group are presented to the network members of CEEWEB within the frame of CEE Coordination Platform.

**Global Environment Facility**

The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) is the financial mechanism for the Rio Conventions, through its implementing agencies (UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank) it deals with global issues of environment and nature conservation. NGOs play important role both in the development and the execution of GEF projects. Thus the participation of NGOs is crucial not only at the project level but also at the policy level of the GEF. Therein lies a primary goal of the Regional NGO Focal Points to encourage and strengthen NGO involvement in the governance of the GEF, notably during the GEF Council meetings where GEF policies are shaped.

CEEWEB, as the Regional Focal Point for Central and Easter Europe, supplies both the CEE NGOs and GEF Secretariat with information, concerns and technical issues, co-ordinates the NGO input from the region to the Council Meetings and assists NGOs to become GEF accredited members. Last, but not least, CEEWEB is regularly consulting with the implementing agencies.
NAME OF NGO: CEEWEB

ADDRESS OF NGO: 3525 MISKOLC, KOSSHUTH U. 13, HUNGARY

EASED BALANCE-SHEET 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERIAL NO.</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>PREVIOUS YEAR (2001)</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A. ASSETS INVESTED (ROWS 2-5.)</td>
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<td>I. IMMATERIAL GOODS</td>
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<td>IV. VALUE ADJUSTMENT</td>
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<td>I. STOCKS</td>
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<td>IV. FUNDS</td>
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<td>ASSETS (FUNDS) ALTOGETHER (ROWS 1.+6.+11.)</td>
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<td>D. EQUITY (ROWS 14-17.)</td>
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<td>I. INITIAL CAPITAL</td>
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<td>E. Allowance</td>
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<td>G. PASSIVE SCHEDULED LIABILITIES</td>
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*Figures were calculated according to the HUF-EUR exchange rate in December 31, 2002 (235,90 HUF=1 EUR)

Date: February 19, 2003
Edit Szász
Treasurer
Statistical code or monetary identification number

NAME OF NGO: CEEWEB

ADDRESS OF NGO: 3525 MISKOLC, KOSSUTH U. 13, HUNGARY

SIMPLIFIED OPERATING STATEMENT 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERIAL NO.</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>PREVIOUS YEAR (2001)</th>
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<td>A. Total income (rows 1-6)</td>
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<td>1. Membership fees</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2. Donations from founders</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3. Donations from the state budget</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4. Donations from other sources</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>5. Other income</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>B. Total expenditures (rows 8-13)</td>
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<td>1. Material expenditures</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2. Personal expenditures</td>
<td>13417</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3. Social security contribution</td>
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<td>4. Depreciation</td>
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<td>5. Other outgoings</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>6. Other expenditures</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>C. Result before tax payment</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>D. Tax liability</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>E. Result (rows 14-15)</td>
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<td>34532</td>
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</table>

*Figures were calculated according to the HUF-EUR exchange rate in December 31, 2002 (235, 90 HUF=1 EUR)

Date: February 19, 2003

Edit Szász
Treasurer
The Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB) is the international network of non-governmental organisations dealing with nature conservation issues in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region. Presently CEEWEB is the only network of the region which has been set up and run by NGOs.

Today CEEWEB represents the network of some 60 environmental organisations in 18 nations with cooperating partners from all over Europe, working together to protect the biological heritage of Central and Eastern Europe. The rich natural heritage is threatened by intensive agriculture, forestry and resource exploitation. Considering that the region has common environmental problems and values, it became evident for the environmental NGO movement in the CEE countries, that co-operation on international level promotes solving their national problems efficiently.

The overarching aim for the establishment of the CEEWEB network was to work on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in CEE countries, to get familiar with each others’ environmental activities, exchange ideas and experiences and to start working on joint projects. These projects are to focus on concrete nature conservation and lobby activities, raising public awareness, and tackling cross-border nature conservation issues and policies.

What has CEEWEB achieved? – A brief history

The Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity was established by NGOs from the following CEE countries: Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Our members have assessed the national efforts for the protection of biodiversity. CEEWEB has developed mechanisms for communication improvement and co-operation, both among NGOs and with the governments. Public education programs have been offered both in schools and directly to the public. They have researched and advocated local, national and regional biodiversity policies. There have been several papers published and training programs have been organized by CEEWEB, relating to ecological networks, national biodiversity strategies and landscape diversity planning.

CEEWEB is the participant of more international programs (Regional Focal Point for the Global Environmental Facility, Ecoregion Based Conservation Approach of the Carpathians, EU-NGO Dialogue) and partner to organizations (European Environmental Bureau, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Euronatur).

What is CEEWEB currently working on – Running projects

- Biodiversity Working Group of the European Environmental Bureau
- Best and worst practices of Natura 2000 implementation
- Natura 2000 Barometer
- Integrated evaluation of regional development plans and strategies according to their contribution to sustainable development
- Central and East-European Coordination Platform
- EU-NGO Dialogue
- European Habitat Forum

What will CEEWEB do? – Work programme for the next three years

For the years to come CEEWEB has set the following priority areas to work on:

- Capacity building for the whole network;
- European Union Accession;
- Environment for Europe process;
- Global Environmental Facility;
- Enhanced co-operation with other biodiversity related NGOs from the European Union;
- Better representation of the CEE countries at various forums, like EEB, IUCN, ECNC, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headquarters</th>
<th>Policy Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kossuth utca 13</td>
<td>Úllői ut 91/b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-3525 Miskolc</td>
<td>H-1091 Budapest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel/fax: +36-46-352 010</td>
<td>Tel/fax: +36-1217 08 03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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