



CEEweb for Biodiversity  
Széher út 40, 1021 Budapest, Hungary  
Phone: +36 1 398 0135  
Fax: +36 1 398 0136  
ceeweb@ceeweb.org  
www.ceeweb.org

## **NARRATIVE REPORT ON ACTIVITIES IN 2014**

The mission of CEEweb for Biodiversity is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development. Registered in 1994, it is now a network of 62 members from 20 countries, who actively work in the CEE region. While covering a broad range of European and regional policies in pursuing its mission, the members of CEEweb especially focus on four thematic areas with the Working Groups (WGs): CITES, Natura 2000, Rural Development and Sustainable Tourism. In addition, the Policy Working Group was established in 2007 for developing horizontal policy responses to tackle the root causes of biodiversity loss. The work of the network is guided by the Board comprising of nine members.

This present report only covers the regionally coordinated activities of the network, and not the various actions of the members. More information about the activities can be found at [www.ceeweb.org](http://www.ceeweb.org).

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT RESULTS IN 2014**

#### **Management of Natura 2000**

CEEweb for Biodiversity has been leading the EHF Management of Natura 2000 Working Group. Representatives of CEEweb have taken part in the 1<sup>st</sup> Steering Committee meeting for the Continental/Pannonian/Steppic/Black Sea Biogeographical Process as well as numerous meetings of the Forest Expert group, which has been drafting the new EC Guideline on Natura 2000 and Forests. Together with our partner, the European Centre for Nature Conservation CEEweb has been organising a Natura 2000 Management Workshop scheduled for 22-23 September 2014 with the focus on Alpine and Continental forest management and financing.

CEEweb representative also participated in the Danubeparks final conference focusing on transborder cooperation between protected areas.

We have been working to promote the Natura 2000 Network through our Photo Contest, Green-Go short film contest and the CEEweb Award for conservation excellence.

#### **Green Infrastructure**

CEEweb has developed and launched a new page on the website devoted to Green Infrastructure. The page consists of case studies organised by stakeholder group: local government, policy maker, business, farmer, environmentalist and scholar. Furthermore, there are pages devoted to funding for GI and CEEweb's offer in terms of organising training courses, authoring brochures etc. CEEweb also participated in the Green City council meeting and presented about the EU and other funding sources for GI.

CEEweb has been preparing its Annual Academy with this year's focus being on Green Infrastructure. The conference, planned for 6-7<sup>th</sup> October 2014 will focus on presenting and discussing Green Infrastructure across scales and sectors with presenters from governmental, NGO and business sectors as well as the academic world. In November 2014, CEEweb plans to organise a Green Infrastructure Workshop in Poland with the cooperation of Biebrza National Park and European Centre for Nature Conservation.

We have also been preparing to launch an online community platform of Green Infrastructure and Water Framework Directive experts to facilitate partner search, knowledge and experience sharing and support the implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

CEEweb has also been co-leading the EHF Green Infrastructure Working Group and provided input to the EC's expert group on Green Infrastructure. CEEweb provided comments on the inclusion of Green Infrastructure and environmental measures in general in the Operational Programmes 2014-2020 in Hungary, Poland and Estonia, and incorporated this topic to our high level conference on RDPs in Brussels in September.

### **Biodiversity Strategy with specific focus on Target 2 actions**

CEEweb has been developing a MAES hub on the website devoted to various processes and initiatives regarding the mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services. CEEweb also took part in the high level MAES conference in May in Brussels. On 22<sup>nd</sup> May CEEweb together with its member organisations organised three events to celebrate World Biodiversity Day in Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovakia.

CEEweb has also been active on Ecosystem Services related processes and provided input to for instance the IPBES, OPERAs and Biodiversity Knowledge.

We send a coordinated message for the No Net Loss consultation and further support the Restoration Prioritization Framework implementation at national level.

### **Reaching sustainable development and green economy at EU-wide and globally**

CEEweb in close collaboration with EEB and other NGO networks compiled NGO recommendations on Sustainable Development Goals, channelled these recommendations to the EU and UN OWG discussions, and communicated them towards the public through social media campaigns.

We carry out a media campaign on the result of the proposed SDGs at the UN General Assembly in September, provide input on the Europe 2020 Strategy review in October as well as present at the international Sustainable Development Conference in Budapest in October.

### **Business and biodiversity**

CEEweb finalized the draft guidelines prepared in 2013 about cooperation between business and NGO containing CEE specialities as well as commitments and opportunities arising from relevant EU processes and tools. We communicated and disseminated updated guidelines to relevant stakeholders from the for-profit sectors through participation with a stand or presentation in large business events. We established an on-line database, a mailing list containing business and NGO stakeholders and a dedicated website for the project with interactive parts, and a monthly newsletter.

We create on-line training on business and biodiversity in order to enhance corporate biodiversity governance.

### **Resource Cap Coalition**

CEEweb continued leading and broadening the European Resource Cap Coalition (RCC). We lobbied for a legally binding 20% energy savings target for 2020 within the European Energy Efficiency Directive. We advocate for a legally binding energy saving target within post 2020 EU climate and energy package. We organized a scientific workshop as well as an interactive workshop in collaboration with SCORAI Europe during the degrowth conference, as well as presented the work of the RCC during the International Conference of Environmental Economics. We organized a Green Week satellite event in Budapest with the RCC and other partners of CEEweb in Hungary on resource use and circular economy. We channelled CEEweb resource use materials into relevant processes and events and through media (e.g. Small Footprint monthly newsletter, twitter and Facebook campaign).

We collect and share five positive and five negative examples from the CEE countries on energy savings to support the proper implementation of the EED as well as to develop an ambitious post 2020 EU climate and energy package. We will compile a scientific report including policy recommendations on the feasibility and socio-economic benefits of sustainable resource use.

### **Rural Development and Biodiversity**

We organized a capacity building workshop with the contribution of EEB to give tips and tricks on the advocacy work on the Rural Development Policy. With our members, we provided comments on Rural Development Programmes in several countries including Romania, Hungary, Estonia and Latvia. With the cooperation of Adept, EEB and BirdLife Europe we organized a high level conference in Brussels in September to share experience on RDP practices and opportunities and to advocate for greener Rural Development Programmes.

### **Biodiversity Proofing**

We continued our work on the biodiversity proofing process providing input to the IEEP's guidelines and compiling guidelines for operational programmes' project selection criteria. We organize a conference in Budapest in November to mainstream biodiversity proofing in the CEE and mentor NGO groups for further advocacy work.

### **CITES**

In June we organized the III Seminar on the implementation of CITES and EU Wildlife Trade Regulations in CEE region to build capacities for 27 participants from 13 countries including scientific authorities and NGOs. The event focused on sharing experience and capacity building on the e-commerce of different CITES species.

### **CBD**

We continued our work to collect data on the Aichi Targets implementation in CEE countries. In collaboration with Friends of the Earth Europe, we publish our reviewed report on the Aichi Targets during the COP12 in South Korea to advocate for more increased and earmarked financing for biodiversity.

### **Sustainable Tourism**

CEEweb together with ETE, Germany, works to ensure the contribution of NGOs to the elaboration of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians. We

organized an NGO meeting on 16-18 June in Budapest to discuss how NGOs can contribute to adoption and implementation of the strategy, and see if experiences can be transferred to other regions. STWG statement about Danube Strategy and Carpathian Convention tourism strategy was prepared. CEEweb facilitated NGO representation at the intergovernmental Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism on May 12-14 in Bratislava, and also at the Carpathian Convention COP4 on September 23-26 in the Czech Republic. There ETE with CEEweb organised a conference on Sustainable Tourism in the Carpathians and presented best practices in Sustainable Tourism with posters and brochure.

### **Capacity building**

The staff of the Policy Office participated in a two-day team retreat to discuss strategic focuses and to improve working processes in the head office. Individual and team performance evaluation and group feedbacks within the Policy Office were carried out and documents on quality checks as well as on organizational structures were prepared. CEEweb Academy as well as our thematic events on rural development, Natura 2000, CITES and sustainable tourism build the capacity of its members and partner organisations on relevant policies and practices.

### **Networking within and outside the CEEweb network**

The Policy Office staff organized local visit to member organizations. CEEweb continued representing CEE view within the EHF and its working groups as well as at Expert Groups of the European Commission. CEEweb fulfils the Vice-Chair position of the EHF. Outside the CEEweb network and EHF members, CEEweb has built additional partnerships and actively cooperated with business partners and scientific institutes.

### **Internship programme**

The internship programme continued in 2014. Three interns from the University of Georgia, USA supported the work of the Policy Office in addition to several volunteers.

### **Organisational and financial issues**

CEEweb Policy Office held regular weekly meetings for the whole Policy Office for better personal management and prioritisation of issues, as well as for identifying internal synergies to increase efficiency. Evaluation of efficiency was carried out and changes in staff and work distribution were adjusted according to feedback – we created two new posts as the Fundraising and Innovation Officer, IT and Creative manager. One more policy officer focusing on land use issues and its horizontal aspects and another assistant has joined CEEweb. Fundraising activities of CEEweb continued, attempting to identify new donors, innovative ideas and creating new products.

A new board including a new president was elected, who held their in-person board meeting in June in Budapest to work on the new strategy of the organization. The new strategy focuses on more targeted focus on the organization, networking strategy of members and more efficient communication.

### **Awareness raising**

CEEweb has been organising the fourth international *Green-Go Short Film Contest*, a competition on ecosystem services, climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as, family farming. All videos to be available on the contest's website. To promote our contest we have shot a promotional video to raise awareness further on environmental issues with the help of visual arts. Furthermore, we have continued our international photo competition

called *Go Wild!* on protected species and lands with the Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation and other members. CEEweb has also participated in street campaigns and organized events (eg. EU Day) as well as disseminated materials and raised awareness on biodiversity. Moreover, CEEweb is creating posters about capping resources and disseminate various brochures e.g. the brochure on Natura 2000 management and on Green Infrastructure. CEEweb creates information hubs on their website about Green Infrastructure and MAES (Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services).

### **Communication**

CEEweb has kept members updated with EU and national policy developments through the mailing lists and the CEEweb website ([www.ceeweb.org](http://www.ceeweb.org)). We issued electronic newsletters targeting decision makers and the members on thematic issues. We have created a new newsletter targeting especially business people to inform them how biodiversity and business can be connected. We also used at a more elevated level our social networking sites for communication such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

**CEEweb for Biodiversity is a network of non-governmental organizations in the Central and Eastern European region. Our mission is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development.**