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## Informative narrative report on activities in 2009

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 76 members from 18 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 within 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.

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 work of the network is guided by the Board comprising three members, and the International Advisory Committee comprising three regular members as well as the WG Chairs.

### **The most important results in 2009**

#### **Supporting Pan-European cooperation for biodiversity conservation**

##### **Assessing the state of biodiversity in Pan-European region**

CEEweb was coordinating the preparation of biodiversity country profiles in Pan-European countries. The aim of this activity was to assess the situation of nature conservation and progress in the implementation of the Kyiv targets, as well as to identify the main challenges in the region. The outcomes of the survey are 46 collected national biodiversity profiles and a synthesis report summarizing the results of them. The publication called *CLEAR VIEW: Regional synthesis report on the biodiversity challenges in Pan-Europe* has been disseminated among Pan-European nature conservation decision makers.

##### **Compiling background documents for the 5<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity in Europe Conference**

CEEweb prepared background documents on the three main topics of the 5<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity in Europe Conference (Valuing Ecosystem services, Biodiversity and Climate Change, Post-2010 Vision for Pan-Europe). The conference was organized by the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Strategy (PEBLDS) on 21-24 September 2009 in Liege, Belgium. The background documents were presented during the NGO preparatory meeting and distributed also among decision makers during the high-level part of the Conference.

##### **Providing NGO input into the 5<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity in Europe Conference**

CEEweb organized and coordinated an NGO preparatory meeting preceding the 5<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity in Europe Conference. 35 NGO representatives from 26 countries got together, covering the whole region of Pan-Europe. Joint NGO messages on the three topics (Valuing Ecosystem services, Biodiversity and Climate Change, Post-2010 Vision for Pan-Europe) were developed and channeled into the high-level discussions. Besides, common project ideas were worked out and have been followed up, with the implementation of which conserving the biodiversity of Pan-Europe would be enhanced.

#### **Awareness Raising on Biodiversity**

##### **Pan-European Biodiversity Picnic**

This initiative was proposed by CEEweb and launched at the Belgrade conference in 2007. Its aim is to raise political and public awareness on biodiversity through regular national picnics on International Biodiversity Day. This year the second wave of Pan-European biodiversity picnics took place in Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia under the coordination of CEEweb. During the picnics

stakeholders from various sectors listened to presentations on the importance of biodiversity, carried on informal negotiations on how to preserve it and enjoyed the locally produced, mostly organic lunch in the nature.

## **CITES Working Group**

### **Monitoring of wildlife trade on the internet in the chosen countries of CEE**

This project started at the end of 2008 when special workshop was carried out in Poland. During the workshop a detailed methodology for the monitoring was developed. The project covers six countries – five of them are represented by WG members and one (Czech Republic) by the Czech Environmental Inspectorate. Monitoring of the internet is split to six separate surveys where the last survey will be carried out in October 2009. According to the plan, each organization participating in this project will analyze the monitoring results on the national level, and then it will be done on the international level. The results of this project will be used during the CITES CoP 15th, as a tool for supporting lobby activities to cover the internet wildlife trade by CITES regulations.

### **Project of international CITES educational exhibition**

The project started in 2008. The exhibition consists of 10 double-printed panels. It is focused on different species and higher taxa covered by CITES. Additionally, information about the Washington Convention, EU Wildlife Trade Regulations and CEEweb CITES WG is provided. Since the beginning of 2009 the exhibition was presented in five countries: Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria. At the moment the panels are being transported between the countries. As soon as they will reach their destination points, the exhibition will be presented to the public of the following countries: Croatia, Serbia, Ukraine and Romania.

## **Natura 2000 Working Group**

### **Representing CEE positions at European level**

We have finished collecting Natura 2000 Implementation Best Practice Examples. 15 examples from 7 countries have been collected and uploaded to the website. CEEweb was invited to represent NGO views on Natura 2000 management from the new EU Member States in the Nature Directors Meeting in 8-10 June, Prague. Based on the Natura 2000 Implementation Fact Sheets prepared by members as well as further information collected from members of the Working Group we have prepared a background paper on the issue. Furthermore Bulgarian NGOs have compiled a background paper on the shortcomings of implementing impact assessments according to the Habitats Directive in Bulgaria. These information were presented to the European Commission, the current and upcoming presidencies and the Nature Directors. All information can be found [on the website](#) of the Natura 2000 WG.

### **CEE Military Training Areas project**

The overall goal of the project is to secure biodiversity values found in military training areas in CEE countries. The project so far has focused on data collection and enhancing cooperation with the relevant stakeholder groups. In 2009 the data collected so far were published in an online interactive [internet platform](#). The successful cooperation on the project with German Foundation Naturstiftung David has continued and is envisaged to last in 2010. CEEweb is now taking part in developing follow-up project ideas based on the results of the data collection to conserve the natural heritage of MTAs in CEE. Besides, CEEweb took a leading part of realizing the workshop 'Managing military training areas of high ecological value in Central and Eastern Europe' that took place in October in Passau, Germany.

### **Site designation in Romania**

In the framework of a smaller project supported by the Hungarian National Civic Fund we provided expert support for Romanian NGOs. In cooperation with Milvus Group, Romania, we organised a two day expert meeting in Nyárádszentlászló, Romania to discuss further steps of site designation. Also we aided the Romanian Natura 2000 NGO Coalition's lobby work towards European and national decision makers to rally higher support for the establishment of the Natura 2000 network in Romania.

## **Climate change and biodiversity**

### **Participation in EU Ad hoc Working Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change**

CEEweb participates in the Ad hoc Working Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change that was established by the European Commission in 2008. We represent elements of the CEEweb policy related to biodiversity and climate change as a contribution to the strategy paper that is being developed by the Working Group, and may result in a Communication from the Commission in 2010.

### **Survey of national climate change policies**

The Policy Office coordinated a survey on how EU Members States as parties of the Kyoto Protocol have developed their national programmes on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Assessments were collected from Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Macedonia, and Serbia. The Policy Office compiled a report of the results and has disseminated it at various relevant high-level platforms. The goal of this survey was to provide a critical assessment and to draw EU and national decision-makers' attention to deficiencies in current climate change policies. Through this we aim to prevent the adoption of further climate change mitigation and adaptation policies that are harmful for biodiversity.

### **Pilot project in Hungary**

The implementation of the pilot project on employing biodiversity and ecosystem services in adaptation to climate change is starting in Hungary. Stakeholder workshops will be held in three microregions and draft adaptation plans for each region will be developed

## **Policy Working Group**

### **Meeting of the Policy Working Group (PWG)**

PWG had one meeting in March, where participants discussed their short and long-term expectations to the future work of the PWG and thus tried to respond to the needs of the participants and the network. Current and possible future trends in the drivers behind environmental, social and economic problems were also analyzed as well as how the absolute limitation of total energy use would influence the environment, the society and economy. The participants also had a chance to practice convincing a Member of the European Parliament about the viability of the CEEweb policy through an interactive role play.

### **BAP assessment**

The EU Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifies actions at EU and MS levels to halt biodiversity decline by 2010. The mid-term review of the BAP shows that even though progress has been made since 2006 in several areas, the EU is highly unlikely to meet its 2010 target of halting biodiversity decline. CEEweb prepared a report on assessing the mid-term review, in which it states that the most important reason for the lack of delivery is that decision makers ignore the drivers behind environmental pressures. The report contains CEEweb's first recommendations including both short term priority actions and long term priority measures in order to reach as soon as possible the missed 2010-target. A leaflet and a press release were also prepared based on the whole report, which were disseminated at the European 'Biodiversity Protection Beyond 2010: Priorities and options for future EU Policy' Conference in Athens, April; as well as in the Nature Directors Meeting in Prague, June.

## **Cooperation with other networks**

### **With environmental and non-environmental European networks**

CEEweb continues its active contribution of the European Environmental Bureau, namely taking part at the Biodiversity and the Market-Based Instruments Working Groups meetings. We have started negotiations about possible ways of cooperation with the European Landowners Organization and European social NGO networks.

CEEweb has continued its active participation in the European Habitats Forum (EHF). The work of the EHF in 2009 focused on preparing contribution to and thus shaping the post 2010 biodiversity policy of the EU. CEEweb has participated in the sub-group meeting of EHF discussing post 2010 EU Biodiversity policies on 5<sup>th</sup> February, Cambridge, UK as well as contributed to the preparation of common EHF positions on post 2010 policies. From the end of 2009 we will participate on behalf of EHF in the Natura 2000 management Working Group of the European Commission.

### **With social networks in Hungary**

The implementation of the pilot project on cooperating with Hungarian social NGO networks has just started in Hungary. Kick-off Conference, four workshops and a Final Conference will be organized in order to reach common understanding on the interlinks between seemingly sectoral issues such as biodiversity loss and poverty, rural abandonment and intensive agriculture, etc. Joint recommendations will be developed and channelled into high-level national and international discussions preparing for the Hungarian EU Presidency in 2011.

### **Capacity-building, networking and communication**

In order to build a stronger and more active CEEweb network, the Policy Office has made continued efforts in the field of networking, capacity-building and communication.

- Within this framework the CEEweb Policy Office is making efforts to activate the sleeping members of its network through seeking out them on e-mail or by phone, and also through collecting answers of a motivation questionnaire.
- CEEweb Policy Office held a training on such issues as effectiveness and working in a team in January.

### **Internship programme**

The internship programme continued in 2009. An intern from the Harvard University supported the Policy Office in the fields relevant to the Policy Working Group during the summer. Since the summer three other volunteers have helped the work of the Policy Office and the fourth is starting her work at CEEweb in October.

**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.**