

PRESS RELEASE

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Budapest, Hungary – About 40 CEE NGO representatives met in Dobogókő in Hungary to share opinions on the necessity of limiting resource use and thus on eliminating its harmful impact on global biodiversity as well as to identify proper tools to shift humanity onto the path of sustainability.

Biodiversity loss is recognised today as a global challenge, which endangers human well-being. When we examine the deeply underlying causes of biodiversity loss, we see that it is indirectly caused by the socio-economic drivers, such as the energy and material intensive production and consumption patterns. For instance intensive agriculture with great material and energy input has detrimental effects on biodiversity in many ways. Addressing energy resource use in a way, which can transform the current production and consumption patterns towards less energy intensive products and services, would thus greatly contribute to mitigating the pressures on biodiversity.

EU countries with their high consumption level and non-EU countries with their relatively energy intensive economies and high biodiversity have all great responsibility in such a transition. Thus it is the interest of EU and non-EU countries to develop EU policies and to prepare for the EU accession in a way, which preserves natural values and supports economic development towards sustainability.

It is a role also of CEE NGOs that deal with nature conservation to open up, identify the drivers behind biodiversity loss in a holistic manner and to lobby for the development of proper policies. Thus main goal of the workshop on "Addressing resource use for halting biodiversity loss" was to reach a common level of understanding on the links between resource use and biodiversity loss among NGO participants. In order to achieve these, the links between biodiversity loss and resource use were explored, and relevant EU and national policies were presented.

According to the International Resource Panel, absolute reduction of resource-use on a global level is necessary to make progress towards protecting our natural heritage. One tool aiming for this absolute reduction was presented in details during the workshop. The Energy Quota Scheme intends to transform the production and consumption patterns, reduce energy resource use, decrease energy dependence, create a market for environmentally friendly products and services, and rebalance the use of human labour and machines, while taking into account and eventually reducing social inequalities in energy resource use.

Ample time was devoted to smaller group discussions to reveal fully the presented Scheme and form a common position on a policy tool to address resource use in order to influence policies properly both in EU and non-EU countries.

This is the very high time to channel the agreed CEE NGO view on the need for resource use limitation through the Energy Quota Scheme to high level international negotiation in order to achieve significant change in policy formulation before any effort will be too late.

About CEEweb for Biodiversity

CEEweb for Biodiversity is an umbrella organization of NGOs in the Central and Eastern European region. Our mission is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development.

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Notes to editors

[1] http://www.ceeweb.org/workingareas/resource_use/energyquota.htm

[2] http://www.ceeweb.org/aboutCEEWEB/annualmeetings/2011Dobogoko/am_academy_2011.html

[3] UNEP (2011) Decoupling natural resource use and environmental impacts from economic growth, A Report of the Working Group on Decoupling to the International Resource Panel