MINUTES OF THE CEEWEB GENERAL ASSEMBLY
10 April, 2003, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

Minute takers: Eszter Bokodi and Anna Iványi
Márton Kelemen will ratify the Minutes.

9:20 Opening of the Assembly
Welcome by Hristo Nikolov, Green Balkans, Bulgaria

András Krolopp, Secretary General, CEEWEB
Presentation and approval of the Agenda

Short welcome by Jaromír Sibl, Regional Association for Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development, Slovakia as one of the first members

Presentation by András Krolopp

The purpose of the General Assembly:
- Approval of past activities, budget and agree on new work program
- Open and frank discussion among member organizations and direct interaction with the Secretariat
- Informal information exchange
- Meeting of thematic groups

The outset of the meeting:
- Statutory part
  Consultation part

Presentation of the history of CEEWEB

1994 – Establishing CEEWEB

Purpose:
- To form common policies and actions for the enhancement of biodiversity in the CEE region
- To promote the enforcement of international conventions for nature and biodiversity conservation
- To enhance the implementation of sustainable development

What has been achieved so far?
- almost 10 years of existence
- several national, regional, international projects
- recognition on European and Global level

On regional level:
- Only nature conservation network, covering all the CEE countries
  - Huge – but sleeping membership

On EU level:
- European Environmental Bureau – Biodiversity Working Group
- European Habitat Forum – CEE membership
- European Parliament
– EU Enlargement – soon the map is re-drown
– EU-NGO dialogue
– Recognition by the Commission – Core Funding

**Global Level**
– GEF-NGO network
– UNEP – consultative status
– UN – Informal NGO Regional Network

**Presentation of financial reports**
Summary of the completed projects 2002 and the ongoing ones in 2003. The financial reports (annual reports and eased balance sheets about the operational budget) were approved based on the document compiled by the CEEWEB accountant.

*The assembly accepted the activity and financial reports.*

**Presentation of the Work Program 2003**

**Calling for NGO input to the network** – What expectations and activities do the participating members have?

Latvian Fund for Nature, Latvia: they expect experience exchange and concrete tasks
Milvus Group, Romania: their aim is the improvement of CITES
UNESCO Pro Natura, Romania: ongoing activities in the Carpathians, the Danube and the Black Sea; they would like practical, on-field projects and more money
Green Actions, Croatia: ongoing projects: Adriatic and Velebit Mountain ecoregion implementation of national legislation
expectations: Natura 2000 implementation international agreements, esp. CITES Aarhus Convention
Ecological Movement, Macedonia: cooperation with Pro Natura
Zelenyi Svit – Friends of the Earth Ukraine: organic agriculture campaign, local actions plan to promote sustainable development
Ecology and Peace, Ukraine: working in Yalta on ecological issues
BIOTICA Ecological Society, Moldova: Biodiversity Working Group with CEEWEB PEBLDS Council land use planning
Green Balkans, Bulgaria: national legislation propose new protected sites wetland conservation threatened species public awareness on international agreements
UNEP National Committee, Bulgaria: World Commission on Culture and Development Sustainable Development Program risk assessment youth programme for NGOs on sustainable tourism
Overview of the proposed structure by András Krolopp

Presentation by Michael Meyer, Ecological Tourism in Europe
Present activities of E.T.E., specific problems of CEE countries, future possibilities of cooperation, work program of the proposed Sustainable Tourism Working Group

Issue raised: what kind of NGOs should be involved: ecotourism or nature conservation NGOs?

Problems of existing certification and ecolabelling systems

Jaromir Sibl proposed two other working groups: CITES and Natura 2000/EMERALD network/Bern Convention/PEBDLS
11:00 Proposed Working Groups
Sustainable Tourism
CITES – Illegal trade
Natura 2000/EMERALD network/Bern Convention/PEBDLS
Agriculture – Biodiversity
GEF
River and Wetland Restoration
Nature conservation in military areas
Forestry

Expectations from CEEWEB in the process:
Conduct a survey on existing expertise
Define concrete goals within a set timeframe

Discussion on the proposed working groups

1. Sustainable Tourism:
   Start from biodiversity-nature conservation side:
   - identify hot spots
     - threats
     - opportunities
   - share information
   - sustainable tourism as a source of income for local people
   Distribute the concept of sustainable tourism
   Model projects

2. CITES – Illegal trade
   Raising of public awareness
   Enforcement for custom officers
   Cooperation with Italy
   Share experiences
   Create a Working Group for officials in the region
   Cooperation with TRAFFIC, WWF

3. Natura 2000/EMERALD network/Bern Convention/PEBDLS
   Information exchange on established sites
   Involve management
   Explore possible funds
   Explore the possibilities of the existing conventions
   Communicate to stakeholders best and worst practices
   Natura 2000 barometer as a way of putting pressure
   Shadow lists
   Expert group for the biogeographical seminars
   Evaluation manual
   Work with local people
   Comparing existing and proposed protected areas

4. Agriculture – biodiversity
   Evaluate agro-biodiversity programs
   Monitoring system
Being present from the very beginning
Explore existing activities

5. GEF
Assess ongoing projects
Provide training for NGOs
Regional input
Shape GEF policy to include CEE interests
Monitoring projects
Middle-sized projects
Cooperation between NGOs and governmental focal point
Influence the flow of the "big money"

6. River and wetland restoration
Communicate the methodology
Convince policy-makers
Cooperation with Danube Environmental Forum

7. Nature conservation in military areas
Achieve the same level of protection
Military activity's effect on conservation
NATO consultation
Reuse of military areas
Involve military capacity in nature conservation
Assess the status in different countries

8. Forestry
CBD Work Program
Share national legislation
Implementation of laws
Link to Natura 2000/PEBLDS

Discussion of possible structure

What should be the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Board?
• It should include the heads of the Working Groups and outside experts.
• Should it be the Board of Members or only a Scientific Board with no voting power?
• Possible tasks: promote, lobby and raise funds.

3 options:
• Two boards: one consisting of members, one consisting of outside experts; meeting separately
• One board: members and outside experts meeting together, but outside experts have less influence, the decisions are made by the Internal Board of the Members
• One board with members and outside experts, all with equal rights

Decision to be made in June.
Approval of applications for membership by vote of acceptance:

- Centre for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism (Serbia)
- Carpathian Heritage Society (Poland)
- The Focal Centre for Biodiversity Monitoring and Conservation (Romania)
- UNESCO Pronatura Ecological Club (Romania)
- BROZ - Regional Association for Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development (Slovakia)
- Ecosilva Retezat (Romania)
- Ecological Society ‘Gradac’ (Serbia)
- Development Center ECOWORK (Serbia)
- Amber Trail (Slovakia)
- Zelenyi Svit – Friends of the Earth Ukraine
- UNEP National Committee (Bulgaria)
- Youth Environmental League of Prydniprovy (Ukraine)

15:00 Closing of the General Assembly
Registered participants:

Andreev, Alexei  Biodiversity Issue Group of the European ECO-Forum/ BIOTICA
Ecological Society
Bojkovski, Boban Ecological Movement of Macedonia
Bokodi, Eszter  CEEWEB
Dimitrova, Milena DEF National Focal Point for Bulgaria Centre for Environmental
Information & Education
Hajdu, Klára  CEEWEB
Iványi, Anna  CEEWEB
Jelisavac, Sanja International Scientific Forum "Danube - River of Cooperation
Kavrakova, Vesselina WWF Danube – Carpathian Programme, Bulgarian Country Office
Kelemen, Márton Association “Milvus Group”
Kornilova, Natalia NGO "Ecology and Peace”
Krolopp, András  CEEWEB
Lengyel, Péter  UNESCO Pro Natura
Lytvynenko, Alla Friends of the Earth Ukraine
Meyer, Michael Ecological Tourism in Europe
Munic, Jagoda  Green Action
Nikolov, Hristo  Green Balkans
Papp, Tamás Association “Milvus Group”
Racinska, Inga  Green Action
Sibl, Jaromir  BROZ
Spassov, Tzvetan UNEP National Committee- Bulgaria
Vaiciunaite, Ruta Lithuanian Fund for Nature
Vlasin, Mojmir  CSOP Veronioca

Participating as observer

Tesliar, Jaroslav  UNDP