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Let's Show the Miracles of Europe in Photos – the Natural Heritage of the Old Continent

Budapest, 24 July 2012 – To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Habitats Directive, CEEweb for Biodiversity in cooperation with its member organizations from the Central and Eastern European region announces a Natura 2000 photo contest.

Natura 2000 is a network of protected areas in the European Union that is designated by the Habitats Directive, which was set up in 1992, and the Birds Directive. The aim of the network is to ensure the long term survival of Europe's most valuable and unfortunately threatened species and habitats.

The recognition that such a network was needed was a response to the fragmentation and degradation of the habitats and the decreasing level and quantity of ecosystem services (e.g. soil formation, carbon- and water cycle, protection against floods or natural disasters, recreation, raw materials, etc.).

The size of natural habitats is decreasing from year by year due to the intensive infrastructural, agricultural and forestry activities, thus Natura 2000 has a key role to protect the biological diversity of the European Union.

The 20th anniversary of the Habitats Directive provides a good opportunity to show the real values of the European biodiversity and to draw people's attention to the need of these areas. Hence, CEEweb for Biodiversity with the support of its member organisations from the CEE region announces a photo contest in the following two categories:

- **Natura 2000 species and habitats – our natural heritage to guard** – Show the beauty of our natural inheritance and take picture of one of the habitat types or species within the **Natura 2000 network**.
- **Ecosystem services from the Natura 2000 network are the key for our survival – how do we benefit from nature?** Natura 2000 network provides **several benefits to people** from recreation through agricultural products to protection from natural disasters.

More information, the application criteria and the information about the awards can be found on the contest's website (<http://www.ceeweb.org/photocontest/>). Applications should be sent to the photocontest@ceeweb.org e-mail address until 15 November 2012. The announcement of the winners will be on 27 November 2012, and selected photos will be presented within the framework of the II. Green-Go International Short Film Contest and Festival (<http://www.greengofest.eu>) on 1 December 2012 in Budapest.

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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.