The meeting of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group was held during the Annual Meeting of CEEweb for Biodiversity on 27th of October, 2011 in Dobogókő, near Budapest.

The participants of the meeting introduced themselves and their organizations to the group.

The agenda of the meeting included discussion on the following issues:

1. **National Tourism Strategy Assessment**

In 2010 the STWG decided to collect further information on National Tourism Development Strategies and their sustainability aspects in member countries. During the meeting the group presented an introduction to elaborate criteria for a National Tourism Strategy assessment which will be further developed during November and December 2011.

2. **Elaboration of inputs for the CEEweb Statement on “Mountains and Tourism” for Rio + 20**

The STWG discussed and presented its message emphasizing the importance of mountain regions and highlighting relation of sustainable development of these regions to private investments and food security. The need for the innovative institutional arrangements and governance models of the Carpathians and the Alps with legally binding protocols on tourism and biodiversity was explained. These issues should find a prominent place in the Rio 2012 agenda. Therefore the call for integrated and socially inclusive policies, as well as low carbon technologies in these regions was send to the UNCSD for preparation of the Rio+20 Summit.

3. **Proposals for funding and projects for STWG**

Two funding opportunities were presented by Michael Meyer and discussed: The International Climate Initiative (ICI) of the German Government (deadline 9 January 2012) and German Assistance Fund.
4. Elaboration of STWG Work Plan for 2012 (core funding)

Tourism and biodiversity

1. EU Strategy for the Danube Region and the linkages between tourism and biodiversity

Objective
- Create awareness and establish partnership among CEE NGOs about the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, especially on the thematic field of tourism

Activities
- Organize capacity building and discussion on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and the linkages between tourism and biodiversity. Based on the discussion develop a priority list of actions to be implemented over the next years.
- Coordinate consultations among NGOs in order to draft a project for implementing the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, organizing two meetings for interested NGOs (one of them will take place in Serbia, 11\textsuperscript{th} May 2012)

Results
- Stronger cooperation among CEE NGOs in implementing the EU Strategy for the Danube Region
- Elaborated proposal for implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, especially its commitments related to tourism

2. Sustainable Tourism Strategy of the Carpathian Convention

Objectives
- Gather interested NGOs aiming for the elaboration of a common statement to the tourism strategy under the Carpathian Convention

Activities
- Support the elaboration process of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy of the Carpathian Convention (“The future strategy for the sustainable development of the Carpathians”).
- Carry out consultation of the STWG for information exchange in order to contribute to the proposal to finalize the Carpathian Convention tourism strategy, organizing one meeting for interested NGOs

Results
- Common CEE NGO statement on the Sustainable Tourism Strategy of the Carpathian Convention

3. Assessments of the national tourism strategies

Objectives:
- Raised awareness of CEE and EU decision-makers about promoting sustainable tourism in local economy and wellbeing while respects the carrying capacity of ecosystems
- Enhanced contribution of CEE NGOs in promoting sustainable tourism in local economy and wellbeing while respects the carrying capacity of ecosystems
- National tourism development strategies in CEE take into account EU tourism and biodiversity policies

Activities:
- Improve the developed methodology for reviewing national tourism development strategies in light of the EU biodiversity policies and the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism
- Prepare assessments of CEE national tourism strategies countries (e.g. Albania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia, Moldova) based on the methodology and pilot study prepared in 2011
Compile a summary document on the results of the six national assessments and disseminate it among CEE and EU decision-makers as well as among CEE NGOs.

Results:
- Methodology further developed to evaluate and influence national tourism strategies on the long term for supporting sustainability and biodiversity conservation.
- Assessment carried out in five CEE countries using the elaborated methodology and a summary report is compiled about their results.
- CEE and EU decision-makers are more aware of and promote the importance of sustainable tourism in local economy and wellbeing while respects the carrying capacity of ecosystems.
- CEE NGOs promote more the importance of sustainable tourism in local economy and wellbeing while respects the carrying capacity of ecosystems.

Further steps for the group activities to the end of 2011 and in 2012

1. Assessment for National Tourism Strategies
   - preparing and disseminating the criteria for the assessment of National Tourism Strategies among selected CEEweb members,
   - collecting the feedback and proposals for their development,
   - presenting the elaborated Study Case in Poland according to agreed criteria to the group members,
   - preparing 5 assessments of the national tourism strategies based on the methodology and pilot study prepared in 2011 (5 countries expressed their interest to be included in the research).

2. Funding opportunities
   - compilation of the procedures for applications to:
     a) International Climate Initiative
        • preparation of concept note of 3 pages including implementation of CBD and possibly Carpathian Network of Protected Areas through a German partner by 9th of January
     b) German Assistance Fund
        • possible application on the following topics:
          - Preparation of EU Danube Tourism Strategy and Carpathian Tourism Strategy
          - Sub – group application for Balkan Countries in sustainable tourism development
          - Urban Development of Tourism
          - Cross-border cooperation, Croatia and Serbia Danube Program
          - Iron Gate National Park
          - IPA projects
   - collecting and reviewing member feedback

3. Organizing three STWG meetings in order to discuss EU Strategy for the Danube Region and the linkages between tourism and biodiversity as well as potential contribution to the Sustainable Tourism Protocol of the Carpathian Convention.

At the end of the meeting the group elected the coordinator for STWG: Michael Meyer (Ecological Tourism in Europe, Germany) and the chairman for STWG: Katarzyna Śliwa (The Academic Section of the Polish Country-Lovers’ Association in Krakow, Poland).
Recall of ideas for STWG development within 2-3 years:

- activating trails in Natura 2000 sites by popularizing of methodology for nature trails,
- straightening members identification with the group (describing a clear target group for STWG),
- arrange a stand on tourism fairs for possible project proposals,
- compile innovative communication materials: video showing the values of nature and its added value for sustainable tourism,
- offer STWG members possibility to disseminate their materials,
- create programs for volunteerism and promote it at national level,
- improve networking with tour operators and other partners and
- increase innovation proactively within the group.

Annex 1

Participants of the meeting

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<tr>
<th></th>
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