

# CEEweb Strategy

2020-2025

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# **CEEweb Strategy**

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## Acknowledgements

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## 1. Executive summary

This strategy is a working document defining mid-term prospects of CEEweb, including its vision and objectives, covering thematic work areas, organisational development, membership, communication, and financial goals.

Thematic priorities and work areas are constantly changing due to the diversifying project portfolio. New topics may be introduced, fine-tuned, or even abandoned in the forthcoming five-year period.

Specific thematic strategies will be also developed (such as communication strategy, membership-outreach strategy) and becoming annexes of this document at a later stage.

The final draft of this document will be proposed to the membership for approval. After approval, a public version will be uploaded to the CEEweb's website.

## 2. State of the Art

Established in 1994, CEEweb is a network of 53 non-governmental organisations in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region. Throughout this time, we have worked in over 20 countries on identifying and changing the drivers behind biodiversity loss; forming common policies and actions for the enhancement of biodiversity in the CEE region; and promoting the enforcement of international conventions for nature and biodiversity conservation. The aforementioned, moreover, has been and continues to be accomplished through our policy work and via the implementation of transnational projects.



### 3. Vision

CEEweb's vision on EU policy level is to become a stronger player and proactive policy influencer on EU level; driving force of cross-sectoral cooperation on biodiversity and nature conservation in the CEE countries; and to build channels to represent members in the EU. To represent our vision, institutionally our focus is to have a stable, sustainable, and renewable financial basis and operation with board members who are actively supporting the organisation; to represent civil society and revitalize the cooperation and networking with members creating a strong and active community.

### 4. General objectives of CEEweb for 2020-2025

#### 4.1. Thematic and policy work

CEEweb will continuously monitor biodiversity-related EU and regional policies and explore their areas of necessary intervention. It will also adjust and develop its thematic capacities and project portfolio in order to carry out those interventions.

#### 4.2. Organisational objective

CEEweb will have a stable organisation led by competent powers and strengthened by a healthy team of employees to implement its strategies and workplan.

#### 4.3. Membership objective

CEEweb will have a strong and active membership community which benefits from its high-quality services.



#### 4.4. Communication objective

CEEweb will further professionalise its communication based on a communications strategy. It will promote its contents via a diverse set of channels.

#### 4.5. Financial objective

CEEweb will have a stable financial basis with adequate amount of reserve, and diverse sources of income from EU and non-EU funds and other contractors.

### 5. Thematic priorities, policy work

#### 5.1. Vision

Central and Eastern European countries are societies where **social goals, ecosystem health and economic prosperity** reinforce and do not undermine each other. CEE countries possess highly biodiverse natural, rural, and urban areas. By virtue of recognizing the full potential of ecosystems health and ecosystem services, basic goods are provided, and well-being is ensured for all members of society. Disaster risks and economic losses due to natural hazards are reduced in all regions.

The **use of land resources and land use policies** in CEE countries ensure a fair and balanced distribution of land, water, biodiversity, and other environmental resources between the various competing claims as well as appropriate management practices to produce goods to meet changing human needs, while simultaneously ensuring the long-term productive potential of these resources and the maintenance of ecological support functions.

Central and Eastern European countries ensure the **long-term protection of the protected area and Natura 2000 network and their protected and threatened species** by establishing effective and adaptive management, strengthening the



connectivity of sites, and significantly decreasing or eliminating the actual threats in line with European biodiversity policies. Biodiversity protection is more deeply integrated into sectoral policies.

Central and Eastern European countries have created peaceful and inclusive societies to pursue the public good and maintain **sustainable socio-ecological** systems, building upon effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels of **governance**. Appropriate and meaningful public participation is adequately woven into decision-making processes, strengthening democracy in Europe. Countries, and civil society actively forge partnerships for sustainable development on the European and global scene.

## 5.2. Goals under the work areas

### 5.2.1. Agriculture and Rural development

- We promote the integration of the concept of sustainability into agricultural policies and practices, as well as into the rural development policies of the European Union and CEE countries.
- We promote the protection and enhancement of biodiversity on farmlands and in rural areas.
- We contribute to improved agricultural policies and promote nature- and climate-friendly sustainable farming practices built on an agroecological approach.
- We promote the integration of biodiversity policy in the policies of the agricultural sector.
- We raise awareness on the importance of healthy soils and soil biodiversity to food security.



### 5.2.2. Biodiversity policies

- We contribute to the development and improved implementation of biodiversity policies with strong positions, recommendations, and expertise.
- We call for ambitious objectives and accountability in the monitoring and reporting on the implementation of biodiversity policies.
- We promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity policy integration in sectoral policies.
- We raise awareness on how biodiversity projects, through green infrastructure and nature-based solutions, can contribute to climate adaptation in an urban context.

### 5.2.3. Climate action

- We raise awareness of the existential threat of climate change that represents for the future of humankind by addressing the problems that will arise, the challenges to be overcome, and the potential solutions to all of them.
- We contribute to the climate discussion by directly addressing three of its core challenging areas: conservation of biodiversity, adaptation and mitigation, and climate justice.
- We work closely with the European youth, raising their knowledge and capacities, and providing them with tools, in order to activate them and help them push forth for the urgent systemic change required to overcome the challenges posed by climate change.
- We help deliver new products and services that can make the understanding of climate change, its implications, and the needs and possibilities of citizen action of easier grasp for a wide, non-specialised audience.



#### 5.2.4. Green infrastructure and Ecosystem services

- We promote green infrastructure as a combined ecosystem service, support and system-level context and correlation for all sectors.
- We promote international cooperation for transboundary green infrastructure connectivity.
- We raise awareness of the vital importance of existing ecological corridors in terms of climate change, biodiversity, resiliency of agriculture, water protection, sectoral cooperation, and sustainable governance.
- We promote the best practices on strategic and spatial planning to enhance the effective improvement of green infrastructure in Europe.
- We foster a fairer national capital accounting system by advocating the importance of green infrastructure and all ecosystem services, in order to provide a real evaluation and acceptance of its losses in GDP calculations.

#### 5.2.5. Natura 2000

- We promote and advocate the importance of the Natura 2000 network as a core area of Trans-European Nature Network and in preserving healthy ecosystems with related ecosystem services and halting biodiversity loss.
- We support an improved and more effective implementation of the nature directives covering designation, proper conservation objectives, adequate and sustainable management, improving conservation status and financing, better communication, and cooperation of relevant stakeholders.
- We raise awareness of the benefits of Natura 2000 network and its role in climate adaptation and green recovery.



### 5.2.6. Health and Biodiversity

- We raise awareness to how ecosystem services can improve human health as well as to the ramifications of ecological destruction in terms of human and veterinary diseases and mental health.
- We promote cross-sectoral collaboration under the One Health umbrella for mutual benefits for people, animals, and ecosystems.

### 5.2.7. Resilience

- We advocate for the better integration of 'resilience' in the national and EU environmental and agricultural policy-development processes.
- We advocate for sustainable agricultural practices and the integration of resilience in the management of farmlands.
- We raise awareness on how farmland biodiversity and agroecological practices can improve and enhance the resilience of agroecosystems.

### 5.2.8. Sustainability governance

- We promote and work towards peaceful, resilient, and equitable societies in the Central and Eastern European region and sustainable development as the overarching framework to achieve it.
- We advocate the protection of fundamental freedoms, public access to information and effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels of governance in all our member countries and at the EU level.
- We promote adequate public participation in decision making as the precondition of sound and just decisions.
- We promote responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels.



### 5.2.9. Budgeting for sustainability

- We work towards making the European Union's multiannual financial framework "sustainability proof" as a means to support the European transition to sustainability and contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on the European level.
- We advocate the sound implementation of EU-level budget regulation in the EU Member States, and the creation of national programmes that meaningfully foster sustainable development. We furthermore advocate European investments to serve the public good and to contribute to increased well-being of all Europeans in a sustainable way.

### 5.2.10. Sustainable Development Goals

- We raise awareness to and promote the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals in public discussions and policy processes.
- We monitor the implementation of the goals in Europe, especially in Central and Eastern Europe and make recommendations for governments and social actors.
- We promote multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral dialogues in our societies and structured dialogues about the goals between governmental non-governmental organizations.

### 5.2.11. Water protection and management

- We support the improved implementation of water related policies, especially the Water Framework Directive.
- We advocate the need of sustainable management and the protection of natural surface and underground water resources in qualitative and quantitative terms, the importance of the implementation and cooperation at river basin scale.



- We influence the planning of measures aiming to improve ecological status, special attention to restoration priorities and climate resilience solutions.

## 6. Targets of organisational development

- Develop inhouse knowledge hub for general office related know-how.
- Human Resources (HR): maintain a diverse team including diverse skills and competencies, professional approach, set a fair workload scheme, reconsider functions and tasks.
- Information Technology (IT): Based on previous development efforts enhance CEEweb's IT system to a secure, reliable, subsidiary system including office software, remote server access, virus protection, Wi-Fi, electronic administration, project management and financial tools. Comply with GDPR on all levels.
- Head office: Relocate CEEweb's office within Budapest to a more sustainable and flexible location closer to the city centre (better accessible by public transport and bicycle) which is offering a wide range of options for part time/home office, meeting, events, and storage. Open branch office in one of the CEE countries.
- Rethink and recalibrate CEEweb's Board that serves the organisation the best.
- Innovate Annual Meetings that contribute to the success of the organisation while complying with the national regulations and the articles of association.
- Make CEEweb's administration as electronic as possible in line with national legislations (e.g.: electronic signatures, submission, etc.) and to be ready to respond ongoing pandemic issues.



## 7. Specific objectives of the membership network<sup>1</sup>

- To dedicate a single point of contact as a Member Liaison Coordinator from CEEweb, to be able to follow up the updates, needs, evaluation and requests of the membership in one hand.
- To create an up-to-date membership database, including profile pages, contact database and other information (e.g., areas of expertise, experience and openness to topics, projects etc.) and upload it in a new designed membership page on CEEweb's website.
- To rationalise the number of the member organisations, to break the contact with the inactive members and to boost the contact and cooperation with the active and responsive members.
- Outreach to new potential members especially in CEE countries where no or too few members are present.
- To simplify and revitalize membership-related procedures such as the application process, membership fee, set of services and requirements, consequences of non-responding and/or non-paying members.
- To follow up the operation of the membership network via annual evaluation and monitoring including the annual revisiting and update of the Strategy.
- To define and agree on a mutually acceptable and beneficial form of collaboration between the Budapest policy office and member organisations (e.g., member organisation's willingness to provide feedback, input in certain matters, respond to surveys, be open to work on common positions, campaigns etc.)
- A recent inquiry/recommendation from Michael Meyer, whether CEEweb is considering expanding in some way to regions outside CEE (e.g.,

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<sup>1</sup> Further details in CEEweb's Membership Strategy.



Croatia, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands). Of course, that would be a bit of a contradiction with our name, but they could be in a dedicated category (e.g., beyond-CEE members). Such collaborations would be really beneficial for project/campaign collaborations, common positions, knowledge exchange, best practice sharing etc.

## 8. Targets of CEEweb's communications

- Deliverance of both an External and an Internal Communications Strategy for CEEweb for Biodiversity, including protocols and know-hows for interinstitutional communications between the CEEweb Office and the member network.
- Deliverance of a new CEEweb website to better showcase, in a modern, up-to-date manner, what the CEEweb for Biodiversity network stands and works for.
- Continuous update of the Members Area in the new CEEweb website, including updates in their activities, calls for actions, tenders, etc., in correlation to the information provided by the members themselves.
- Reorganisation and boost of the CEEweb social media channels, with thematised publication slots, including the promotion of member activities.
- A tandem set of information distribution for the members, twice a month, via the Policy Updates and the Members Newsletter, respectively.

## 9. Targets of fundraising and finances

- Ensure financial grounds to employ a fundraising officer who coordinates CEEweb's efforts on fundraising and business development.
- Continue CEEweb's efforts in fundraising and business development. Keep it as a general responsibility in all employment contracts. Ensure



proper and fair monitoring of individual FR efforts and develop rewarding system.

- Develop protocol of fundraising and business development which ensures that in case of awarding it would not diminish CEEweb's financial resilience (via own contribution and project cash-flow)
- Make reserve of 100.000 €
- Develop a set of services that can be offered in order to create a source of additional income to the organisation. These services will be put on CEEweb's website as part of references, capacity, and expertise (e.g., writing studies, consultation in projects, developments, research, campaigns)
- 'Business and Biodiversity': approaching national and multinational companies in Hungary and the wider CEE region with opportunities to collaborate on certain campaigns, projects, activities, relevant CSR (corporate social responsibility) work for them, valuable income for us.
- Ensure CEEweb's financial sustainability via creating a diverse project portfolio and adequate amount of co-financing.
- Increase the number of non-EU funded projects and outsourced expertise that can secure necessary co-financing of the EU-funded ones.
- Besides usual finding mechanisms (LIFE, Interreg) explore new ones (e.g.: UIA, Horizon2020, EIT, COST, IVF)
- Create a complex integrated project financial monitoring system including project budgets, staff cost calculation, timesheets, vacations, overhead, co-financing, cash-flow, and external expertise.



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