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NARRATIVE REPORT ON ACTIVITIES IN 2013

The mission of CEEweb for Biodiversity is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development. Registered in 1994, it is now a network of 59 members from 20 countries, who actively work in the CEE region. While covering a broad range of European and regional policies in pursuing its mission, the members of CEEweb especially focus on four thematic areas with the Working Groups (WGs): CITES, Natura 2000, Rural Development and Sustainable Tourism. In addition, the Policy Working Group was established in 2007 for developing horizontal policy responses to tackle the root causes of biodiversity loss. The work of the network is guided by the Board comprising three members, and the International Advisory Committee comprising three regular members as well as the WG Chairs.

This present report only covers the regionally coordinated activities of the network, and not the various actions of the members. More information about the activities can be found at www.ceeweb.org.

THE MOST IMPORTANT RESULTS IN 2013

Global cooperation for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development

Advocating for Pan-European cooperation in resource and land use

CEEweb contributed to the 6th Biodiversity in Europe Conference held in April in Batumi, Georgia; where we presented our views and prepared a background document on the potential of the Pan-European Biodiversity Platform in addressing the underlying cause of biodiversity loss as well as compiled a position paper on *Ensuring that Biodiversity Financing Mechanisms serve the benefit of all life on Earth*.

Sustainable Development Goals

CEEweb in close collaboration with ANPED compiled NGO recommendations on Sustainable Development Goals and channeled these recommendations to the EU and UN OWG discussions and communicated them towards the public through social media. CEEweb in collaboration with ANPED compiled a briefing on how NGO networks (including EEB, WWF, BL, FoEE, ANPED) in the EU implementing Rio+20 commitments.

Convention on Biodiversity Diversity

CEEweb with Friends of the Earth Europe has been working to make an assessment on how far we are advanced in reaching the Aichi targets. The data were completed with national expertise from our member organisations and ministries in 18 European countries within and outside the EU and the results will be issued during the SBSTTA 17. Besides, we also participated in the EU Expert Working Group on Biodiversity and Development (Target 6) in April in Brussels.

In cooperation with FoE Hungary, a capacity building workshop on biodiversity and its financing, including National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) was organised. Participants discussed the recent state of biodiversity in Hungary, threats, possibilities and

future scenarios of biodiversity conservation.

Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

CEEweb for Biodiversity participated and provided input to the working documents of the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services during the Pan-European Stakeholder Consultation in Leipzig and during the Eastern European Consultation in Budapest.

Supporting European biodiversity policy formulation

EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 with special focus on Mapping and Assessing Ecosystem Services (MAES), No Net Loss, offsetting and restoration targets

CEEweb along with other NGOs has been involved in the work of the EC's working group of the No Net Loss initiative launched by the European Commission and coordinates the NNL working group within EHF. The initiative aims to ensure the conservation of biodiversity in non-protected areas target to project development, however it raises serious concerns if not designed properly, especially in case economic considerations will dominate the initiative. CEEweb through the EHF and in cooperation with other NGOs has been represented the conservation interests via commenting on official documents, contributing to a review, participating actively in meetings and lobbying.

CEEweb co-leads the Target 2 EHF working group and participates and coordinates European NGOs to provide input to the Restoration Prioritization Framework along with MAES and Green Infrastructure. CEEweb participated in the Restoration Prioritization Framework workshop in May and provided input to the workshop document as well as to additional related meetings (CGBN, October 2nd Restoration Prioritization WG meeting in Brussels, etc.). Besides, CEEweb has been also collecting cases on restoration cases from the CEE to provide as an input and form further recommendations for the process at national level.

CEEweb participated in the EC's MAES' pilot on thematic pilot on habitat and species conservation status for ecosystem assessments and provided comments and input on several documents.

This year's CEEweb Academy focused on the Biodiversity Strategy's restoration targets and the No Net Loss initiative apart from the Mapping and Assessing Ecosystem Services (MAES).

Green Infrastructure, land use and the 7th EAP

In cooperation with ECNC, CEEweb organized a workshop in Budapest for several stakeholders to design and implement joint Green Infrastructure projects. Besides, CEEweb also collected case studies at CEE level on already existing successful Green Infrastructure implementation from local to national scales. Based on the outcome of the workshop and the cases, CEEweb compiled a brochure on the benefits of Green Infrastructure based on the case studies also including recommendations for stakeholders for the better integration of Green Infrastructure elements into spatial policies and FAQs of the planning and implementation of GI project. Besides, during the 2nd European Conference on Regions and Biodiversity: 'Local action for biodiversity: the role of regions', the Green Infrastructure section was chaired by CEEweb and we co-organized a Croatian workshop on Green Infrastructure sectoral implementation in Croatia in November.

Besides, CEEweb channelled its opinion on Green Infrastructure through the EHF Target 2 Working Group to the Committee of Region's opinion on Green Infrastructure and provided information for members on the issuing of the strategy and relevant sources.

CEEweb also collected information on land use, Green Infrastructure and protected areas in three Hungarian counties and compiled a report of the outcomes.

Climate change and biodiversity

Ecosystem-based climate adaptation measures were discussed in the Natura 2000 workshop in Bulgaria, as well as at national level in Bulgaria, Estonia and Poland. The role of agriculture and forestry in mitigation is to be presented in the CEEweb Academy. Results of the UNFCCC COP18 will be evaluated; CEEweb position prepared on it and sent to the Environmental Council participants. CEEweb also contributed to the in-depth assessment of vulnerability to climate change and ecosystem-based adaptation measures in the Carpathians.

CITES - Monitoring wildlife trade in CEE

Members of the CITES WG participated in the CITES COP16 in Bangkok and influenced the negotiations on species, e.g. shark and polar bears. During the COP, CEEweb CITES WG distributed leaflets with the latest results from the monitoring of the e-commerce in specimens of CITES species in CEE region.

Nature and Biodiversity

Representing CEE positions at European level

CEEweb was represented in the EC Natura 2000 Management Working Group and the EC Natura 2000 and forestry expert group, EC Large Carnivores Stakeholder Meeting and the EC Agriculture and Biodiversity WG as well as the Wild10 Conference in Salamanca. CEEweb also attended additional EC consultations and the meetings of the European Habitats Forum. CEEweb participates in all EHF subgroups dealing with specific topics, and as group coordinator especially the one following and influencing the Target 2 processes as well as the No Net Loss Initiative. CEEweb also met the European Commission and discussed specific issues.

Financing Natura 2000 and ecosystems

CEEweb provided recommendations to the new LIFE budget's negotiations and provided a material together with EEB and Latvian Fund for Nature on identifying biodiversity related opportunities in the forming MFF with special focus on PAFs and OPs. CEEweb members also provided comments on the PAF formats and collected information and input to PAF developments at CEE level along with OP discussions. Besides, CEEweb participated in the Hungarian PAF workshop in Budapest.

Management of Natura 2000

Together with EEB, CEEweb organized a Workshop on Natura 2000 management to identify threats, challenges and solutions, with a specific focus on management of forest and other habitats in the Alpine biogeographic region, resulting in a brochure compiled from the collected ideas. NGO input was provided to the Alpine Biogeographic Process during the habitat selection as well as in the Workshop and Seminar in the form of recommendations and good examples for management. CEEweb members actively took part in the discussions about the wilderness approach in forestry management and participated in the Wild 10 conference too. Besides, NGO views were collected and channeled into the expert group discussion on the new guidance of forestry and Natura 2000. Information and advice was provided for West-Balkans NGOs related to Natura 2000 preparations and the designation of the Emerald network. CEEweb also provided presentations for its Croatian members and partner organization on the biogeographical processes and Natura 2000 financing during two seminars in March and April.

Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000

CEEweb organized an event within the frame of the Green-Go Film Festival to distribute materials on synergies between the WFD and the nature directives and also collected cases on the overlapping issues to help implementation of EU policies.

Common Agricultural Policy, Rural Development Programmes and small-scale farming

CEEweb organized a workshop in July for CEE participants in Budapest on the new CAP and RDPs. Based on the results of the workshop and feedbacks from CEE countries on the 2007-2013 RDP's, CEEweb compiled a study, which was also presented at a high level conference in Brussels for 100 participants organized in cooperation with ADEPT and EEB. CEEweb also presented the results during a seminar on CAP 2014-2020, Lithuanian's Presidency event in Vilnius organized by Lithuanian Fund for Nature. CEEweb also provided the members with up-to-date CAP information and inquired information on the related Partnership Agreement and Operational Programme processes.

CEEweb also compiled a report on small-scale farming and collected cases from several countries including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova and Macedonia.

Biodiversity proofing - Integrating biodiversity and ecosystem services into the EU Funds

In co-operation with Friends of the Earth Hungary, the impact of EU funds on biodiversity was evaluated, and recommendation in terms of the Operational Programmes was given for improvement. Case studies were collected to show positive and negative examples for EU funded projects considering impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services with the aim to amend future EU funding mechanisms. CEEweb also lobbied for including biodiversity and ecosystem services considerations in the EU and in national call for proposals and project selection criteria. CEEweb evaluated Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment documents from 3-4 CEE MSs considering biodiversity and ecosystem services and provide recommendations for decision-makers.

Enhancing cooperation for the profit of business and biodiversity

CEEweb initiated a project aiming to enhance cooperation between the business and the NGO sector. With our partners (BROZ – Slovakia, AS of PTTK – Poland, Veronica and Daphne Cz – Czech Republic, Global Nature Fund - Germany) we compiled case studies on well-working cooperation, collected business/NGO database containing organizations open for partnership as well as organized a workshop on 7th October 2013.

We compiled a publication providing guidance on how fruitful and beneficial cooperation can be established and maintained for the benefit for nature and companies. Furthermore, we presented the project results at various forums, including the City Hungary, CSR Hungary and the Hungarian Sustainable Development Summit. Last, but not least, we started cooperation with EMVFE (the first CSR NGO in Hungary), Hungarian Business Council for Sustainable Development.

Sustainable Tourism

CEEweb together with ETE-Germany ensured the NGO contribution to the elaboration of the Carpathian Convention Tourism Strategy (CCTS). We organized an NGO meeting 12-15 June to inform interested NGOs about the importance of their contribution, to develop NGO recommendations on the current version of the CCTS as well as identify next steps. We are also coordinated NGO participation in the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Tourism meeting, scheduled for 21-22 October 2013 in Brasov/Romania.

We revised the already existing five CEE assessments on National Tourism Development Strategies as well as compiled four other assessments and prepared a summary report out of them. The Terms of Reference was announced and the assessment work was carried out. The results of the analyses was published and commented on the CEEweb website.

Resource Cap Coalition

CEEweb continued to coordinate the work of the Resource Cap Coalition (RCC), which is lobbying for EU-wide resource use limitation. CEEweb organized an expert meeting in Spain in March 2013 in collaboration with one of the RCC core members, Ecologistas en Accion

aiming to discuss the RCC proposal and how it can be further elaborated. Furthermore CEEweb together with ANPED and EEB organized a meeting in Brussels to show RCC activities for Brussels based stakeholders including the European Commission. Besides, the RCC proposal was presented at various events, including the SCORAI workshop in Istanbul, June, 2013. A workshop on biodiversity and sustainable resource use was organised in 14 September in Aggtelek.

Awareness raising

CEEweb organized the third Green-Go Short Film Contest and Festival, a competition for short films on waste, water and saving species. The best films were presented in October in Budapest at the UN Water Summit and also during the film festival in a popular venue in Budapest and all videos are available on the festival's web page. Besides, CEEweb continued its international photo contest on Natura 2000 with the Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation and other members and besides, it planned a cartoon a contest. CEEweb also participated in many street campaigns and organized events (EU Day, Sustainability Day) and disseminated materials and raised awareness on biodiversity.

Moreover, CEEweb compiled and disseminated various brochures e.g. the brochure on Natura 2000 management and on Green Infrastructure.

Capacity building

The staff of the Policy Office participated trainings on internal communication and strategy planning and continued the individual and team performance evaluation and group feedbacks within the Policy Office.

CEEweb Academy built the capacity of its members and partner organisations on how to reach the restoration target and how to implement the No Net Loss Initiative of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. Here, academic and EU decision-makers and NGOs give presentations on the topic. Presentations are followed by discussions in order to develop common level of understanding within the network, and CEE NGO recommendations are to be compiled. A training on volunteering was organised in cooperation with FoE Hungary.

Networking within and outside the CEEweb network

The Policy Office staff organized local visits to member organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia to strengthen cooperation, provide training, discussions on CEEweb policy and NGO proactivity and ways to increase success in the NGO field. The National Focal Point system continued its operation.

CEEweb continued representing CEE view within the EHF and its working groups. Also, CEEweb fulfils the Vice-Chair position of the EHF. Outside the CEEweb network and EHF members, CEEweb has built additional partnerships and actively cooperated with the Tradable Energy Quotas (TEQs), Dutch Footprint Group, CAN Europe.

Internship programme

The internship programme continued in 2013. One intern from the University of Georgia, USA in summer, one intern from Romania, and one from Finland supported the work of the Policy Office. In addition, several Hungarian interns and volunteers helped the work of the Policy Office throughout the year.

Organisational and financial issues

CEEweb Policy Office held regular weekly meetings for the whole Policy Office for better personal management and prioritisation of issues, as well as for identifying internal synergies

to increase efficiency. Evaluation of efficiency will be carried out and changes in staff and work distribution are adjusted according to feedback. Fundraising activities of CEEweb continued, attempting to identify new (strategic) donors based on the experiences from 2012.

Communication

CEEweb kept members updated with EU and national policy developments through the mailing lists and the CEEweb website (www.ceeweb.org). We issued four electronic newsletters (the fourth in coming up in December) targeting decision makers and the members on thematic issues and issued press releases on several topics related to biodiversity conservation, but we also used the community channels for communication such as Facebook and our new YouTube channel.

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.